A STYLISTIC ASSESSMENT OF ABŪ-TAMMAM'S POETRY

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by

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To my father, my mother and the

beloved ...

ABSTRACT

The main object of this thesis is to assess the various techniques of poetic language in Classical Arabic as they appear in a particular corpus: the work of Abu: Tamma:m.

After a general introduction which is meant to put the poet and his production in the right historical and socio-cultural context, different aspects of his conservatism are dealt with (e.g. poetic register, archaism, dialectism), before introducing the concept of 'foregrounding' which will provide the rest of the analysis with its theoretical framework.

According to this principle, a work of art in general is marked by its deviation from norms. Such deviation is behind the element of interest and surprise which gives significance and value to a piece of art. In Abu: Tamma:m's poetry, the foregrounded feature occurs in the form of parallelism or a deviation, and in both cases, it is picked out by the reader who will interpret it in relation to the background of the expected linguistic pattern. In the analysis,particular interest is concentrated on phenomena at various linguistic levels. In this way, parallelism in Abu: Tamma:m's poetry is found to occur mainly on the formal level (i.e. grammatical, phonological, metrical), while deviation is of interest primarily when it occurs on the semantic level. Each level is dealt with separately in different chapters.

Thus, chapter three is concerned with grammatical parallelism and its two facets in Abu: Tamma:m's poetry:

the syntactic and the lexical-semantic. Both are dealt with successively in relation to the structure of the single verse of Classical Arabic which is found to be the basic foundation of this type of parallelism.

In chapter four, phonological parallelism is dealt with and such devices as alliteration, internal rhyme, and morpho-phonological correspondence are analysed in detail, after an attempt to assess the way they have been approached by the Arab scholars. Their contribution to the musicality of a piece of poetry as well as their expressive power are illustrated with examples from Abu: Tamma:m's production.

Metre, as an instance of foregrounded parallelism, is then looked into in chapter five. Here, the foundations of Arabic metres are first discussed before dealing with the distribution of metres in Abu: Tamma:m's work. Then, the interaction of metre and 'prose rhythm' in his production is assessed, followed by a discussion of rhyme and its cohesive function.

Finally, semantic deviation is analysed, and such features as semantic 'absurdity' and 'redundancy' in Abu: Tamma:m's language are briefly dealt with, before looking into the figurative devices most typical of his style. Particular interest is concentrated on metaphor for its central position in his work, and reference is made at various occasions to the attitude of the Arab scholars towards his own use of figurative devices.

CONTENTS

TRANSCRIPTION

(Traditional Tunisian Pronunciation of Classical Arabic)

I. Consonants:

ʔ	The glottal stop.
h	The voiced glottal fricative.
ħ	The voiceless pharyngeal fricative.
ɛ	The voiced pharyngeal fricative.
q	The emphatic uvular plosive.
x	The voiceless velar fricative.
ɣ	The voiced velar fricative.
k	The voiceless velar plosive.
y	The palatal frictionless continuant.
ʃ	The voiceless palato-alveolar fricative.
j	The voiced palato-alveolar fricative.
l	The lateral alveolar.
r	The rolled alveolar.
n	The nasal alveolar.
s	The voiceless alveolar fricative.
ṣ	The voiceless emphatic alveolar fricative.
z	The voiced alveolar fricative.
t	The voiceless dental plosive.
d	The voiced dental plosive.
ṭ	The voiceless emphatic dental plosive.
ḍ	The voiced emphatic dental plosive.
t̲	The voiceless dental fricative.
d̲	The voiced dental fricative.
ḍ̲	The voiced emphatic dental fricative.

f The voiceless labio-dental fricative.

m The nasal bilabial.

b The voiced bilabial plosive.

w The bilabial frictionless continuant.

II. Vowels: In the broad transcription of Arabic texts encountered in this work, only the three principal vowels of Arabic and their long counterparts are represented:

a / a: , u / u: , i / i: .

The different allophones of any one of these vowels are represented by the same symbol, notwithstanding that they may be articulated in different areas.

III. On the use of hyphens: In the the transcription of Arabic texts, hyphens are used to mark word-boundaries which fall within one syllable, and separate from words such grammatical items as articles, conjunctions, etc.

NOTES ON TRANSLATION

Apart from Abu: Tamma:m's poem on the conquest of Ammorium [Vol. I, pp. 40-74, 71 lines] which has been translated by A.J. Arberry,[1] all quotations from A.T.'s huge poetic collection have been translated by the present author. As expected, this is an extremely difficult task, and the main endeavour has been to remain as close to the original as seemed possible, attempting to convey the spirit of Arabic to the reader while aiming at the same time at the preservation of English idiom. The language of Abu: Tamma:m's poetry is strongly marked by archaic overtones which relate it very closely to the old poems of Classical Arabic. Those who are familiar with those poems will know that they contain a large number of words the exact meaning of which is doubtful, and has been controversial even amongst the Arab scholars themselves. In those cases, only approximate interpretations or most probable guesses could be given. The present author is well aware that amongst the renderings, there are many on which opinions will differ: when a choice of interpretations offers itself, that which seemed most agreeable to the context has been chosen. In a number of cases, the translation has been slightly twisted from the original so that it could be presented in a way which is more adequate

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1. A.J. Arberry: "Arabic Poetry: a Primer for Students", pp. 50-63.

and more likely to preserve the 'correctness' of English language. Notes are here provided to indicate where the translation has differed from the original. It is hoped that this will provide the reader with some insight into the feeling of Classical Arabic poetry, and fulfil at the same time the purpose for which this work has been intended.

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

At the time of their first appearance in history, the Arabs were in possession of a considerable body of traditional poetry which, according to K. Brockelmann, "does not go beyond such elements as are met with in the case of many other gifted races on a low level of civilization, such as the Bantu negroes or the South-Sea islanders".[1] Yet he recognizes its chief charms ,its great precision and high perfection, qualities which it acquired through a skilful cultivation of its themes and a concise elaboration of its form on the part of the Arab poets.

Throughout history, Arabic poetry closely reflects the social, economic and political changes which resulted from the Islamic movement and the rise of the great Muslim empire following the Islamic conquests. In this wide empire, an important social mixing took place between nations of various cultures and origins. Several waves of Arab tribesmen settled in the newly invaded countries and mixed with the natives, an event which led to an important linguistic development in the empire. Most of the non-Arab Muslims showed a great eagerness to learn Classical Arabic (henceforth C.A.), the language of the Koran, of the

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1. K. Brockelmann: "Arabic Literature" in Encyclop. of Islam, 1st ed., 1913, Vol. I, p. 402.

Islamic tradition and, above all, the language of the ruling class. Hardly a century after the conquests, C.A. became the official language of literature, of science and arts, besides being the language of religion.

With the rise of the Abbasid empire (750 A.D.), the use of Arabic extended throughout the Muslim countries. The number of 'Arabized' Muslims grew considerably. Arabic took supremacy over all the languages previously spoken in the conquered lands[1] and a new class of scholars, scientists and literary men was born amongst the non-Arabs, particularly amongst the Persians. This does not mean of course that the non-Arabs completely left their native languages; on the contrary, many of them developed their own languages, and many features of those affected Arabic in its sounds and forms as well as in its vocabulary.[2] In fact, a quick look in the literature of this age will show us how the Arabs succeeded in making of this deep social mixing a fruitful and homogeneous linguistic amalgam.

In those conditions, C.A. went through an important and quick evolution, from a bedouin language, harsh-sounding and difficult, to a 'civilized' medium, supple,

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1. e.g. Ancient Pehlevi, spoken by the Persians; Aramaic, Nabathean and Syriac, spoken in Iraq and Northern Arabia; Syriac and some other semitic languages spoken in Syria; Coptic, spoken in Egypt; Berber, in North-Africa. To those languages, one should add Ancient Greek which used to exert its influence on the whole Eastern world, and Latin whose influence was noticeable in North-Africa and Spain.

2. The famous scholar al-Ja:ħiḏ (d. in 869 A.D.) gives a detailed account of those changes which affected Arabic; see "al-Baya:n wa-t-Tabyi:n", Vol. I-IV and particularly Vol. I.

rich and straightforward. However, it conserved many of its original characteristics and remained conformable to its basic syntactic and morphological rules.

Parallel to it, and because not all the people of the empire were equally arabized, a 'language of communication' was developed. It had recourse to the easiest ways of linguistic expression, simplified the phonetic system, the morphology, syntax and vocabulary of C.A.; it abandoned the case-endings and, with them, the whole case and mode grammar; it also abandoned the classical distinction between genders and kept using a small number of fixed rules to generate sentence structures and distinguish between the different syntactic relations within the sentence.[1] This Arabic was to make the basis for the different variants which we encounter nowadays in the different colloquial dialects. It was deeply rooted amongst people of the lower class which represented the majority of the Abbasid Society. It threatened to modify C.A. completely and led to solecism which became so widespread that deviation from the 'pure habits' of C.A. was noticed even amongst the Arabs.

By the end of the VIIth c. A.D., this process went so far that it was no longer accepted, especially when it affected the language of the Koran and threatened to lead to conflicts on its interpretation. As a reaction,

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1. See J. Fück: "ɛarabiyya: Recherches sur l'Histoire de la Langue et du Style", p. 8; the author mentions a good number of references in his footnotes, and quotes many anecdotes illustrating features of this new 'language of communication', pp. 8-11.

the movement of "Arabic purism" was created to oppose the gradual corruption of the language and impose 'pure' Arabic as a linguistic ideal to be sought for any artistic expression. Moreover, the purity of language became a mark of distinction and refinement, and many were the princes, caliphs and the high-ranking officials who were praised in poetry for their eloquence and avoidance of lisping.[1]

This attitude urged the Arabs and many of the Mawa:li: (i.e. the non-Arab Muslims) to turn back to C.A. trying to rejuvenate it and glorify its best models. The more 'correction' of language became a matter of education and good manners, the greater was their eagerness (the non-Arabs particularly) to adopt it, by sheer force of zeal and perseverance, instead of the 'vulgar' idioms of their environment.[2] It is not surprising therefore to come across Persian names, for instance, amongst the most famous scholars of this period, names like Abu: Hani:fa in theology, Sibawayh in grammar and philology, Ibnu-l-Muqaffaɛ in prose literature, Baʃʃa:r and Abu: Nuwa:s in poetry, and many others.

This interest in the preservation and revival of C.A. gave birth to the grammatical studies which started during the VIIth century A.D.

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1. See al-Ja:ħiḍ: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 98-160, with many anecdotes and quotations from poetry and various popular sayings; see also Ibn Qutayba: "ɛuyu:nu-l-ʔaxba:r", Vol. II, pp. 155-160; J. Fück: op.cit., pp. 8-32, discusses this question in detail with many references to other sources.

2. See Ibn Qutayba: op.cit., Vol. II, p. 157, l. 5; and J. Fück: op.cit., pp. 27-32.

I. The Birth of Arabic Philology

Under the Caliphate of al-Raʃi:d particularly (caliph between 786 and 809 A.D.), the Abbasid dynasty reached the pinnacle of its glory. The great economic prosperity fulfilled the preliminary conditions for a wide cultural development. The caliph was a liberal protector of poets, musicians and scholars of all kinds.

In his reign, Arabic linguistic studies achieved a great progress in the hands of renowned philologists like al-Aṣmaɛi: (d. 828 A.D.), al-Khalil (d.791 A.D.), al-Farra:ʔ (d. 822 A.D.), al-Anṣa:ri: (d. 830 A.D.), al-Kisa:ʔi: (d. 805 A.D.) and so many others. For all those philologists, C.A., the 'bedouin idiom', remained the example, the canon, the linguistic ideal which had to be reincorporated in the usage of people. Its best examples were preserved in the historically authentic text of the Koran, which was recorded, put together and officially circulated during the VIIth century A.D.,[1] and also in the prophet's utterances, speeches and epistles as well as in the literary monuments of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic period (poetry, speeches, proverbs, popular tales, etc.).

With the continuous growth of the Abbasid empire, the largest cities of the caliphate (e.g. Baghdad, Baṣra, Ku:fa, Fusṭa:ṭ - later Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo) now became important centres of trade, crafts and culture, with

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1. See F. Buhl: art. "Koran", in Encyclop. of Islam, 1st ed., 1913, Vol. II, part 2, pp. 1063-1076; see particularly pp. 1067-1070.

their own educational institutions, libraries, literary and scientific circles. Similarly, they were the centre of a very complex linguistic situation. From occasional remarks made by al-Ja:ḥiḍ in his various writings, one may gather a considerable amount of information on the correct language of true bedouins coming to these cities, on its gradual corruption in the neighbourhood of towns, through intercourse with the peasantry, on the 'patois' of the lower orders, the cant of pedlars, the 'argot' of beggars and the technical terms of trades and professions. Al-Ja:ḥiḍ also mentions some of the most widespread cases of mispronunciation and faulty speech, on the one hand, and euphemism and mannerism on the other. Those extremely divergent tendencies soon affected or, at least, threatened to corrupt the purity of the Bedouin idiom.

As a reaction against this developing situation, two philological schools were born in Ku:fa and Baṣra. Their main purpose was to preserve C.A. or al-ʿarabiyya, by fixing its rules and reviving its models, collecting and verifying what was still stored of its ancient treasures in the memories of the bedouins and the professional 'reciters' (ruwa:t ; sing. ra:wi: or ra:wiyah). For these ends, their basic criterion was to disapprove of all urban idioms and go deep into the Arabian Peninsula where the purity of the language was still alive, in order to collect the material which they needed, by making written records . They selected their informers amongst the tribes which had no contact with non-Arabs, that is, amongst those who preserved their original linguistic habits

and remained free from the influence of foreign languages.[1] The fact that Arabic philological literature preserves much material about the early dialects of Najd, Hija:z and the highland area of the south-west, and very little about those of other areas, is mainly due to those restrictions to which the philologists committed themselves in their campaigns of investigation. Indeed, the tribes of Tami:m, ʔasad, Bakr, Tayʔ and Qays used to live by the Najd area of the peninsula, while Hudayl and Kina:nah were settling in the Hija:z area: those were the tribes from whom most records of C.A. were taken.

To collect their material, some philologists went to live amongst the tribesmen for periods extending sometimes to a year or two. In other cases, the tribesmen themselves moved to the cities to 'sell' their knowledge of old poems and proverbs. Many of them became teachers or professional reciters in the educational circles of the Basrian and Kufite mosques, or in the mosques of the other big cities of the empire. Many Arab scholars were of this category of teachers. From their systematic research and laborious investigations, they gathered a solid body of information on the features of the various recognized dialects and displayed the characteristics of the old tribal tradition with luxuriant details and quotations from poetry. Each one of their statements was carefully documented with the

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1. al-Suyu:ti: "al-Muzhir", Vol. I, pp. 211- 212, reports a detailed statement by al-Fa:ra:bi: about those investigations and the tribes on whose idioms the normalization of C.A. has been made.

names of the original narrator and its transmitters, following the same method used formerly by the members of the theological schools in their elaborate work on the collection of the prophetic utterances (al-ħadi:t). On the basis of those enquiries, the characteristics of every attested dialect were fixed, and some phonetic features were recognized in different dialects (e.g. kaskasah and its parallel kaʃkaʃah, i.e. the palatilization of the voiceless velar plosive /k/; taltalah, i.e. to use a prefix /i/ in the forms of the imperfect, and a suffix /i:y/ in forms of the relative adjective). The numerous cases where an isolated word in a given dialect had a different form or meaning in another one were also recorded. However, one should recall that those dialectal differences in the use of C.A. diminished considerably after the Islamic conquests. On the other hand, the philologists' interest in the dialects for their own sake developed only later; meanwhile, the information gathered about them served mainly for elucidating difficulties in the collected literary texts, including the Koran, and constituted the basis of what was going to be the "standard Arabic".[1]

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1. For more details on this matter, see J. Fück: art. "ɛarabiyya", in New Encyclop. of Islam, 1960, Vol. I, pp. 569-571; I. Anis: "fi-l-lahaja:ti-l-ɛarabiyyah", particularly Chap. II to V, pp. 33-173.

II. The Abbasid Cultural Expansion

With the birth of the Abbasid dynasty and the expansion of their empire, the material conditions of an immense cultural burgeoning had been already initiated. The new caliphs quickly reaped the advantage and, by means of tolerance and patronage, gave fuller scope to a splendid humanistic revival.

Side by side with the Arabs, the peoples of the conquered countries, an amalgam descendant from various origins and inheritors of several great ancient civilizations (e.g. Assyrian, Babylonian, Phoenician, Ancient Indian, Greek and Roman), possessed a spiritual experience which actively contributed to the cultural development of the Caliphate. Speaking of this matter, H.A.R. Gibb says:

> "the former subject-peoples take their place in every department of life and literature alongside the Arabs, each bringing the distinctive features of their culture to enrich the whole. From the time of Alexander, all the civilized lands of the Near-East had been profoundly influenced by Hellenism. Out of the resulting action and reaction arose a distinctively eastern branch of Hellenistic thought which found expression in Alexandrian philosophy and the Eastern Christian schisms ..." 1

Parallel to this movement,

> "there still existed also a pagan community in Northern Mesopotamia who, under the name of 'Sabians', rendered great services to Muslim literature and science. In Egypt, the Alexandrian schools of philosophy,medicine and

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1. H.A.R. Gibb: "Arabic Literature: an Introduction", p. 46.

> astronomy, though sadly diminished, remained sufficiently active to influence the work of the Muslims in the latter sciences. This Hellenistic atmosphere also favoured the propagation of the Gnostic cults, a wide variety of eclectic systems strongly tinged with dualistic and Pythagorean teachings." 1

This was the part of the Aramaic 'Hellenized' peoples in the development of Muslim literature and thought. Alongside these,

> "Indian philosophical and scientific works were translated and studied, and certain Iranian elements,both Mazdean and Manichaen, combined with the rest to form a peculiar syncretistic philosophy. The influence of this school was naturally strongest in Iraq, where it, with the earlier Gnostic syncretisms, was in a most favourable position to affect Islamic studies. Stronger Indian influences were introduced in the Muslim world by another Iranian community, of more mixed descent, which had been in prolonged contact with Buddhism in Bactria and Sogdiana." 2

The Arabs were quickly attracted by these trends. The expanding movement of translation, led mainly by non-Arab elements (e.g. Hunayn Ibn Isħa:q, d. 873 A.D.), facilitated to a large extent the growth of foreign influence on the Muslim mind, particularly the influence of the Greeks, who gained a large success among the Arabs.[3] The Greek Neoplatonic philosophy also prevailed on the Abbasid thought, and al-Kindi:, a philospher of pure Arab descent (d. 850 A.D.), who was the first to impose his name in Arabic philosophy and gain the title of 'The Philosopher of the Arabs', was himself a student of the Greeks.

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1. Ibid., pp. 46-47.

2. Ibid., p. 48; see also: ʃawqi: Ḍayf: "al-ɛaṣru-l-ɛabba:si-l-ʔawwal", Chap. III, pp. 89-132.

3. ʃawqi: Ḍayf, ibid., pp. 109-115, gives a brief but more detailed account of the movement of translation and its development in this period.

Greek influence was noticeable in medicine as well, through Galen, whose teaching and practice were promoted by Ibn Ma:sawayh (d. 859 A.D.) and, above all, by the greatest of the medieval doctors al-Ra:zi, known to Europe as Rhazes (d. 930 A.D.).

This Hellenistic revival and the prevailing domination of the Neoplatonic philosophy gave birth to theological discussions raised around various metaphysical problems (e.g. the reality of human freedom, the orthodox doctrine of predestination or qadar; the relationship between the philosophical pantheism of the Neoplatonic thought and the rigid monotheism of the Koran, etc.). Those discussions soon developed into lively polemics between different philosophical schools of which, the most famous was the Muʿtazilah school (lit. the 'secederes' or 'neutrals'); its members were applying the keen solvent of Greek dialectic on the Koranic ideas, and the Aristotelian logic on the prophetic concepts, thus giving their theological concepts a fantastic original character; they proclaimed the supremacy of reason, a claim which was tenaciously rejected by the Orthodox (Sunnah).[1] Many other schools were formed, each bringing new dimensions to those polemics, and enriching the philosophical monuments of the Arabs with new supplies of various sources. Amongst those schools, one may recognize the 'Aʃʿarite'

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1. The chief principle of the Sunnah movement was summarized in the expression: "bi-la: kayf!" (i.e. do not ask how).

school (led by the so-called al-Aʃɛari:, d. 935 A.D., himself educated in 'Muɛtazilite' circles) who reconciled Greek physics with the data of the Koran and the tradition. One may also recognize the milder Muɛtazilites who became the 'left wing' of the scholastic theologians, and the more radical Muɛtazilites who found a new sphere of activity in the ʃi:ɛah movement. Finally, the important contribution of the Orthodox movement of the Hanbalites should be mentioned; they opposed the rationalistic teaching of the Muɛtazilah and were known for their tenacious opposition to any discussion of the Koranic and prophetic concepts.[1]

Those theological discussions had a great expansion throughout the Abbasid empire and a great influence on the educational life, each school trying to profess its own theories and concepts. Many of them even gained the sympathy and support of some high-ranking members of the government. This was the case for the Muɛtazilah, for instance, publicly supported by the Caliph al-Ma?mu:n (Caliph between 813 and 833 A.D.) who imposed an inquisition against the Orthodox or Sunnah, thus encouraging the Muɛtazilah to leave discretion and give vent to theories each more revolutionary than the last. Their domination was to extend long after this Caliph, until the accession to the Abbasid throne of al-Mutawakkil (Caliph

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1. Ahmad Amin devoted the three volumes of his "Ḍuha-l-?isla:m" to the study of those movements, their development and their concepts. See also: ʃawqi: Ḍayf: op.cit., pp. 126-137; H.A.R. Gibb: op.cit., pp. 67-71.

between 847 and 861 A.D.), himself supporting more moderate concepts. But throughout the period when the civil power was supporting the Muctazilah, their opponents, particularly amongst the orthodox Hanbalites and the mild Aʃcarites, were permanently in danger of persecution.

Those religious and philosophical discussions, the interaction of cultures and thoughts, the confrontation between the Arabo-Islamic tradition and the diffused legacy of Hellenism amongst the educated classes of the empire, in addition to an expanding economic development, all those factors were to affect Arabic literature and culture for the next two and a half centuries.

The largest cities of the Caliphate now became important cultural centres. Their splendid palaces and mosques, embellished with intricate designs, became the basis of numerous educational institutions, libraries, literary and scientific circles. Cities like Ku:fa and Baṣra competed even with Baghdad, the metropole, in order to gain intellectual supremacy. Their great markets (ʔaswa:q) played an important cultural role as well. The Su:q of Mirbad in Baṣra, besides being one of the oldest and most active Arab trade centres, was also the place where philologists of different schools used to meet the professional transmitters of 'High Arabic' idioms. Its teaching circles of history, literature, philosophy, theology and sciences used to attract young scholars and learners from all parts of the empire. This city, grouping peoples from all origins and beliefs, was the ideal spot for the philosophical circles to conduct their

lively polemics. It was also one of the main literary centres where poets of different trends and styles used to recite their works and show their skill to a wide range of highly qualified critics. Similar activities were taking place at the same time in the other big cities of the Caliphate, a fact which made competition between them livelier and kept the cultural development in continuous ascension. Having its own educational institutions, its own libraries, literary and scientific circles, each one of those cities was forming a kind of independent school whose aim was to innovate theories and methods in various intellectual fields and extend its influence over other schools by forming as many brilliant and original scholars as possible.

Generations of scholars were graduated from those schools. The Abbasid scholar was particularly highly educated, well-read in a variety of fields. Specialization was still unknown to him. It was in this age that the word ʔadab (i.e. literature) acquired an especially wide meaning to which H.A.R. Gibb drew our attention when he said:

> "henceforward, ʔadab, in its literary sense, was no longer confined to the secretarial manuals of etiquette, but applied to all treatises based on this widened Arabic-Islamic tradition, including both the adaptation from Persian and Hellenistic sources."[1]

One of the first accomplishments of a good 'homme de lettres' was, in this age, not only to learn Koranic verses, to know their meaning and different interpretations,

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1. H.A.R. Gibb: op.cit., p. 78.

and master 'good' Arabic in its best monuments, but also to know history, philosophy, science and foreign languages, to be able to appreciate good literature and take part in the philosophical and theological discussions. In fact, as Von Grunebaum puts it, the poet of this age was

> "expected to be a learned man in control of the whole fund of contemporary knowledge. It is not enough that he should be familiar with the traditional rules and conventions of his craft ... He is to be comprehensive and highly bookish sort of erudition, for his work will be judged on its factual as well as its formal correctness." 1

This phenomenon was mainly encouraged by the growing demand for education created by the bureaucratic organization of the empire and the growth of an urban bourgeoisie. The most famous scholars of this period were regularly entrusted with the education of the young princes. Their lectures, or ʔama:li: (lit. dictations), covered a wide range of topics and attracted learners of all kinds, including members of the lower social layers. The use of paper, newly appeared but quickly widespread, facilitated the generalization of education and soon, scholars of modest origins started to impose themselves amongst the great names of Arabo-Islamic culture.

In poetry, particularly, the best poets of this period originated from the 'struggling' classes of the Abbasid society. Thus, Baʃʃa:r's father was a hodman and

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1. G.E. Von Grunebaum: "The Aesthetic Foundations of Arabic Literature" in Per. "Comparative Literature", Vol. IV, 1952, p. 325.

Abu: Nuwa:s's mother a wool-spinner; Abu-l-ɛata:hiyah, while a child, was engaged in selling pottery, and Muslim's father used to be a knitter; Abu: Tamma:m himself tried several professions while a child, including the job of an artisan and a water-carrier; and so were most Abbasid poets, scientists and scholars. On the other hand, the common people were engaged in the cultural life and took part even in the religious and philosophical polemics. The competing schools of thought widely exploited them in order to expand their circles and extend their influence.

In studying any poet, scientist or scholar of this age, all those historical factors should be taken into consideration. A poet like Abu: Tamma:m (henceforth, A.T.), with whom we shall be concerned in the forthcoming chapters, cannot be thoroughly understood if one does not take this complex cultural situation into account. The main characteristics of his work and style must always be considered in relation to the different intellectual trends which influenced his mind. In fact, he may well be considered as the 'model' Abbasid scholar, thoughtful, widely educated and with a good command of poetry, grammar, philology as well as of philosophy and theology. All this was supported by a refined taste and a highly sensitive poetic gift.

III. C.A. Poetry Under the Patronage of the Philological Schools

By the beginning of the IXth century A.D., the Arabian desert was still supplying the cities with poets of

high linguistic skills (e.g. Abu-l-Bayda:ʔ, Ibnu-d-Dumaynah, Ibn Mayya:dah, Abu-l-ɛamaytal, ɛuma:ra-bnu ɛaqi:l, an-Numayri:, and the like). With those, we have other poets from the cities, born and educated mainly in the mixed urban societies, who nevertheless succeeded in acquiring a high knowledge of C.A. so that one could hardly differentiate their language from that of native bedouins.

This was made possible primarily thanks to the intensive research of the philologists and their systematic work on Arabic. Although the philological schools were involved in a great deal of rivalry, they all worked together against the gradual impoverishment of the language in the mixed societies of the empire, trying to define the 'correct' modalities of 'high' Arabic, and preserve both the extensive vocabulary and the pure idiomatic usage of the Arabian desert. Many of them were particularly interested in collecting the 'rarities' of Arabic, full of unusual forms and disused vocabulary, and unaffected by the linguistic vagaries of the spoken idioms. Verses from C.A. were quoted by the grammarians for some peculiarity of this kind, and many were the scholars who concentrated their lectures on comments and explanations of the vocabulary, syntax and peculiar structures which they encountered in their enquiries.[1]

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1. al-Ja:ħiḍ has already noticed this feature and, to a certain extent, criticized it in his "al-Baya:n wa-t-Tabyi:n", Vol. IV, p. 24.

Soon, a concept of 'high Arabic', as a standardized and unchanging artistic structure, was established and the ruling class actively contributed to maintain it and encourage its development. One of the chief conditions to get to official responsibilities in the government (e.g. the secretarial jobs) was the keen knowledge of this type of Arabic in all its intricacies.

Gradually, a conservative linguistic sensitiveness developed, encouraged by the court, and strongly supported by the philologists who established themselves as the fervent protectors of 'high Arabic' poetry. Poets no longer had to learn their craft exclusively by association with their predecessors. Rather, they began to perfect their training by systematic instruction from the philologists, with a strong conviction that the old poetic models were the chief guarantor of the 'pure' tradition of Arabic, and success in their imitation the highest proof of the poet's mastery of his art. This had the effect of imbuing the poets themselves with a more or less philological approach to their work, and poetic merit soon became dependent upon philological criteria.[1]

Similarly, literary criticism developed along with this tendency, largely inspired by grammatical

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1. See for instance al-Iṣfaha:ni: "al-ʔaya:ni:" Vol. X, p. 82 and Vol. XVIII, p. 184, where he reports how a poet had to seek the approval of a grammarian before presenting his panegyric to the Caliph; and how al-Khalil, the famous philologist, proudly speaks of his authority over the literary production of his age.

considerations, and mostly in the hands of grammarians. It is probably in this period that the concept of 'correctness' in the judging of literature appeared, together with a set of formulated directives to the writer who wished to achieve the requisite level of the 'high style' (jazl) as opposed to the 'low' (saxi:f). Examples of the high style were sought mainly in the great models of pre-Islamic poetry (known as Muɛallaqa:t and qaṣa:ʔid) whose unapproachable superiority was strongly held and which, therefore, should be the only ideal worth pursuing.

Consequently, the contemporary poets (al-Muḥdatu:n or al-Muwalladu:n) were refuted and their works rated inferior to their predecessors'. To have been born in this period was in itself a proof of poetic inferiority. Linguistic and philological considerations largely contributed to the development of this prejudice, the old poetic models having been considered as repositories of the pure classical idiom. Doubtless, the rebuttal of contemporary poetry just for its recency was a mistake of evaluation on the part of the critics, because artistic perfection should be appraised regardless of its newness or oldness. In fact, this was the point to be made by Ibn Qutayba (d. 889 A.D.) in the famous critical introduction to his book "aʃ-ʃiɛru wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ" (i.e. Poetry and the Poets), where he discussed the right valuation of pre- and post-Islamic poets; he said:

> "I have not preferred the ancient poet for his antiquity nor scanned the modern poet for his recency, but have scanned both with an equitable eye and given each one his due ... God has not limited learning and poetry and eloquence to

> one age rather than another, nor distinguished one people thereby above another, but has made it a joint heritage among his servants in every age, and has made every ancient thing new in its time and every honour parvenu at its beginning." 1

This statement by Ibn Qutayba was echoed by a strong reaction against the philological insistence on the supremacy of the ancient poetic models: this was the 'Modernization' movement led mainly by poets of non-Arab origins (e.g. Baʃʃa:r, Abu: Nuwa:s, Abu-l-ɛata:hiya, and the like) who mastered Arabic to perfection and succeeded in gaining popularity even in the teaching circles of their time.[2] They were altogether against the outworn forms and hackneyed stylistic mannerism drawn from ancient poetry and almost incomprehensible to their contemporaries. Their subjects were no longer sought in the 'wild', 'primitive' life of the desert, but in the life around them. In their works, they introduced the popular turns of style, with new unexpected comparisons and epithets. They rejected the classical norms which urged the poet to follow exactly the standard form of the pre-Islamic qaṣi:da [see Chap. II, sect.1 p.33-38], and called for a new poetic ideal. In this connection, it is interesting to point out with I.M.

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1. Ibn Qutayba" "aʃ-ʃiɛru wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ", Introd. pp. 62-63; translated and quoted by H.A.R. Gibb: op.cit., p. 78; al-Ja:ħiḏ expresses the same opinion in "al-ħayawa:n" Vol. II, p. 27 ff.

2. See, for instance, al-Ja:ħiḏ's praise of Abu: Nuwa:s's language and style in Ibn Manḍu:r: ʔaxba:r Abi: Nuwa:s, p. 6; see also Ibnu-l-Muɛtazz: "Tabaqa:tu-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ", who reports various statements on the linguistic brilliance of this poet and others of his generation, pp. 194, 201, 202; and al-Iṣfaha:ni: op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 143-150 (on the poet Baʃʃa:r), etc.

Filshtinsky the political sympathies behind the development of this movement. Speaking of Abu: Nuwa:s who played an important part in it, Filshtinsky rightly notes that

> "the inveighing of Abu: Nuwa:s against antiquated poetic traditions was not only the expression of his own artistic tastes but also the reflection of the definite political sympathies of the Mawla: [i.e. a non-Arab Muslim], primarily the Persians struggling for intellectual emancipation. The poetry of Abu: Nuwa:s contributed to the undermining of the religious foundations of the caliphate's power, and confronted the 'classicism' of the ruling strata with the ideals of the rapidly developing urban population ..." 1

Even Abu: Nuwa:s's wine songs, which made his fame, were more than the simple expression of a reveller's feelings; in fact, they reflect a definite attitude of contempt to the classical traditions and the poet who slavishly clung to them and praised the nomad life of the desert and its ideals. From the formal point of view, the leaders of this movement succeeded in acquiring a style which displayed the genius, versatility and elegance of the classical idiom, together with the wittiness and refined turns of modern urban life. Those were the features which characterized what J. Fück called the "New Standard Arabic".[2] This new medium lost a lot of the vigour and wealth peculiar to the classical idiom,but it was certainly capable of expressing a wide variety of factual, imaginative and abstract subjects, with great refinement and precision.

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1. I.M. Filshtinsky: "Arabic Literature", translated from Russian by H. Kasanina, p. 93.

2. J. Fück: op.cit., pp. 49-50.

Soon, it gained expansion and popularity, even in the Arab circles, and was quickly adopted by famous prose-writers, like al-Ja:ḥiḍ, as a new prose medium which served effectively to bring the Arabic 'humanities' out of their scholarly and technical isolation, into a positive relation with the public interests and the social issues of the period. One of the immediate results was that prose-literature succeeded/displacing in poetry - still closest to the tradition, despite the attempts of modernization - from its former social function, restricting it more and more to a purely aesthetic role.

This aspect of poetry was to become even more pronounced during the IXth century A.D. Indeed, the gap between literary and spoken Arabic in the mixed urban societies kept on widening and tended to increase the learned character of poetry which became, now more than ever, the symbol for 'high style' and verbal subtlety. This period witnessed an immense development of literary production, both in poetry and prose, seconded by the tireless activity of the philological schools. This was bound to produce in due course a considerable volume of technical literary criticism, directed in the first instance towards poetry. Faith in the tradition led poetic production to be excessively conventional, not only in its topics and genres, but also in its forms and means of expression. Originality was confined to elaboration and modification of prefigured patterns, with the poet's language as strictly regulated by the rules of grammarians and lexicographers as were his motifs and the prosodical forms at his disposal.

The inevitable consequence was the steady rise both of subtlety and ornateness of presentation. In dealing with poetry, a great interest was to be concentrated on 'surprise', on the 'extraordinary' and the 'unusual' or 'strange'. As Von Grunebaum explains it:

> "the latecomer discovers hidden relations between the elements of the motif, notes unused possibilities for pointing it up, and tends to evoke in the hearer or reader that pleasure which we derive from the dispelling of obscurity and the apprehension of unsuspected conceptual affinities - a pleasure noted by Aristotle and Arab theorists in their discussion of the metaphor which, both to Aristotle and to the Arabs, is the Queen of ornaments." 1

To pave the way for the poet, the 'science of rhetoric' (ɛilmu-l-Bala:ɣah) was introduced: its main task was to look into the various styles according to whether they employ 'figures of speech', 'tropes' and the like, to classify the poetic 'beauties' and 'faults', and offer a complete analysis of literary production in terms of styles differing in their use of rhetorical embellishments.[2] Knowing the finest intricacies of rhetoric became an essential part of the poet's education in addition to the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and the old literary monuments of C.A.

Under these conditions, Arabic language was bound to become a learned medium cultivated by Arabs and non-Arabs alike. Its best monuments started to be compiled in anthologies which the learner should consult in order to

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1. G.E. Von Grunebaum: op.cit., p. 328.

2. See for instance the introduction of al-ɛaskari: to his rhetorical work: "aṣ-Ṣina:ɛatayn", pp. 1-5.

master his art and have access to its devices as used by more gifted and talented predecessors. This led the literature of this age, and poetry in particular, to a new direction which was never expected,namely to the decline of true poetic art and the growth of 'artificiality', with a consistent pursuit of wit, verbal brilliance and originality of metaphor and simile. This is al-Badi:ɛ, the 'new style', the embellishment of verse by an ingenious exploitation of the resources of Arabic language. Although this trend had its foundations in the classical tradition,[1] its profusion in Arabic literature was only noticed during the VIIIth century A.D., in the poetry of Baʃʃa:r, the 'leader of the Modernizers'; but it was ascribed to a poet of the next generation, Muslim Ibnu-l-Wali:d who was highly esteemed by some but severely condemned by other critics as "the first who corrupted poetry".[2] This is because, in his work, al-Badi:ɛ devices were so in profusion (and so they were in the poetry of his followers) that they were brought into open recognition despite the adverse opinion of the philologists.

One should point out here that the position of the scholars towards al-Badi:ɛ was not always clear. Some accorded its devices as being conventional,inconformity withthe traditional style of the Koran, the uniqueness of

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1. See Ibnu-l-Muɛtazz: "al-Badi:ɛ", introd., p. 1.
2. See "al-Iṣfaha:ni op.cit., Vol. XIX, p. 31.

which might have come from its ɣara:bah (i.e. strangeness, singularity), a feature peculiar to al-Badi:ɛ in its best examples. Others, on the contrary, refuted those devices considering them merely as examples of empty verbosity. They also protested against the new conception of the chief merits of poetry as consisting of elegant expression, subtle combination of words, fanciful imagery, witty conceits and a striking use of rhetorical devices. The fact remains however that al-Badi:ɛ developed as a well established poetic trend only with Muslim Ibnu-l-Wali:d, who was then followed by other poets and his style most perfectly exploited by his disciple Abu: Tamma:m (A.T.).[1]

With the poets of this generation, and particularly with A.T., the revival of the classical tradition into livelier and more expressive compositions was achieved mainly on the basis of al-Badi:ɛ. Facing the strict conventions of C.A. poetry, which dictated the content of verse, the only resource left for those poets to achieve superior excellence was the pursuit of formal perfection and stylistic originality, two features which were strongly represented in their works. In fact, although they continued in the pre-Islamic tradition,

> "their descriptions far excelled in richness and vividness those of the ancient qaṣidas. Heroic themes which had receded into the background in the poetry of the ... 'modernization' period now reappeared. Even the

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1. On all these matters, see: Ibnu-l-Muɛtazz: "al-Badi:ɛ", introd. pp. 1-3; al-Ja:ḥiḍ: "al-Baya:n wa-t-Tabyi:n" Vol. I, pp. 50-51; ʃawqi: Ḍayf: "al-Fann wa Maḍa:hibuh fi-ʃ-ʃiɛri-l-ɛarabi:", p. 175; H.A.R. Gibb: op.cit., pp. 61-62; G.E. Von Grunebaum: op.cit., pp. 335-336, etc.

> eulogistic poems, a genre which retained the most conservative and stable traditions, sounded new, livelier and far more expressive in the composition." 1

It is here that A.T. was to attain eminence and it is with those formal aspects of his style that we shall be concerned in the forthcoming chapters.

IV. A.T.: a Distinguished Name in C.A. Poetry

Born in the neighbourhood of Damascus, in the small village of Ja:sim (≃ 805 A.D.), from purely Arab origins according to the most reliable sources,[2] he tried very young many professions, including those of an artisan and a water-carrier. In search of a living, and supported by a strong will and a wide ambition, A.T. travelled a good deal, sojourning in the largest cities of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Iran. His eventful and unestablished short life[3] provided him with a large experience and a wide knowledge. Like most intellectuals of his age, he was learned in poetry, theology, philosophy, astronomy and in different contemporary sciences. During his sojourn in Fusṭa:ṭ (the ancient capital of Egypt, at

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1. I.M. Filshtinsky: op.cit., p. 109.
2. He was also said to be of Greek origins, and his father to have been a Greek wine merchant (or a perfumer); see: Ṭa:ha Husayn: Introd. to Quda:ma Ibn Jaɛfar: "Naqdu-n-Naṯr", p. 12; Ṭa:ha Husayn: "Min ħadi:ṯi-ʃ-ʃiɛri wa-n-Naṯr", p. 97 to 139; D.S. Margoliouth's biography of Abu: Tamma:m in "Encyclop. of Islam", 1st ed. 1913, Vol. I, p. 109; see also: I.M. Filshtinsky: op.cit., p. 109; N.M. al-Bahmi:ti: "A.T.: ħaya:tuh wa ħaya:tu ʃiɛrih", particularly part one, pp. 28-37, where the author deals in detail with this question; ʃawqi: Ḍayf: al-ɛaṣru-l-ɛabba:si:, pp. 268-269; etc.
3. He died in 846 A.D. in Mosul in Iraq, where he was appointed head of the post.

the limits of present-day Cairo), he worked as a water-carrier in its great mosque where he attended various teaching circles.

Very young, he wrote poetry; but his first poetic experiments met with no success. In those, the influence of his traditional learnings may easily be detected. After his return back to Syria, from Egypt, he was entrusted with the education of the sons of the distinguished family of "Abdelkarim", from the tribe of Tay?, a profession which had a good effect on his own education since it required a permanent reading in various fields, particularly in poetry. For a solid literary education . . his pupils, he selected a wide range of ancient Arabic poetry which served for his poetic courses. On this point, he showed the fine taste of the famous compiler of anthologies which he was to be.

He also sojourned in Iraq where the expansion of Arabo-Islamic Humanities was in full bloom. There, he met with the competing philosophic and theological trends, mixed with the main theories and concepts of the philological schools and literary tendencies. He actively took part in this life thanks to a developing poetic gift and a growing experience. It was at this time that his work was noticed and he was invited to the court of the Caliph al-Muctaşim (Caliph between 833 and 842 A.D.). Soon, he became his court poet. The general trend of his verse quickly gained the praise of his contemporaries and suited the taste of the high-ranking officials, especially amongst the conservatives, partners of a prompt revival of

former glories. From this point of view, A.T. stands as the inheritor of C.A. literary tradition. He is mainly a eulogistic poet. His verse consists mainly of the customary panegyrical odes, addressed - as in the tradition - to noble and influential people, and composed according to the old models, with a traditional vocabulary and an exotic imagery, often lauding bedouin values (e.g. nobility, courage, generosity, all often praised in unmeasured terms). The following lines, composed in the praise of the Caliph al-Ma?mu:n illustrate this feature of his work quite well [A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, pp. 152-153, l. 14-17]:

1. ?alla:hu ?akbaru ǰa:?a ?akbaru man ǰarat fa-taħayyarat fi: kunhihi-l-?awha:mu;
2. man la: yuħi:ṭu-l-wa:ṣifu:na bi-qadrihi: ħatta: yaqu:lu: qadruhu ?ilha:mu: ;
3. man ʃarrada-l-?iɛda:ma ɛan ?awṭa:nihi: bi-l-badli ħatta stuṭrifa-l-?iɛda:mu: ;
4. wa takkaffala-l-?ayta:ma ɛan ?a:ba:?ihim ħatta: wadidna: ?annana: ?ayta:mu: .

1. (Great is Allah! great also is he [i.e. the Caliph] whose being confounded our reasons;
2. He whose power cannot be comprehended by those who describe it and therefore, they say that this power is a miracle;
3. He who has driven want and poverty by such [generous] donations that poverty itself has become a temptation;

4. He who cares for the fatherless so well that we all desire to be orphans.)

This was generally his trend in his panegyrics; but it happened also that this apparently outmoded and false tone is replaced by a truer expression and a more original creation, especially when the person concerned is someone that he deeply respected and esteemed. This is equally the case in his elegies which reveal him as a typically classical elegist who lauds the dead in the customary phraseology which, in some cases, becomes touching and expressive of a poignant grief.

He also wrote satires, love poems and short meditative verses. In the latter genre, he excelled and one may consider him as the predecessor of al-Mutanabbi: and al-Maɛarri:, two of the most famous 'poet-philosophers' of the next generation. In fact, his work abounds in terse, vigorously expressed axioms which he often invented himself or inherited from the old treasures of Arabic culture. Many of them later became household words.

Another aspect of A.T.'s relationship with the tradition was his interest in compiling anthologies of ancient poetry. Indeed, and like most intellectuals of his age, his interests were varied, and his reputation as an anthologist of poetry went sometimes beyond his reputation as a poet. For some, his choice of other poets' work displays an even better taste and artistic sensitiveness than the poetry which he composed himself.[1]

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1. See for instance I.M. Filshtinsky: op.cit., p. 110.

Subsequently, his most famous anthology, "al-ħama:sah"[1] (i.e. the Book of Fortitude), was taken as a model for compiling other anthologies of poetry by the Arab scholars of the Middle Ages.

A.T.'s interest in the classical models of Arabic poetry left a great impact on his own compositions. To a considerable extent, he was a traditional poet, a panegyrist who succeeded in reiterating in a new form the tribal function of the pre-Islamic poet, that is, to 'immortalize' the patron in panegyrics or elegies and defend him against his enemies and rivals.

The poetic genres with which he dealt were related in the tradition to a certain 'universe' whose form and content were strictly set. He was a member of a certain society and was writing to a certain class of audience who believed in certain values and, therefore, was in a position to sanction his work or proscribe it accordingly. As much as they are literary, those values are also related to different linguistic levels (lexical, phonological, prosodic, syntactic, semantic); they constitute what one may call the artistic 'sensitiveness' of the period. It will be within this context that the

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1. This anthology owes its title "al-ħama:sah" to its first section consisting of verses on the valorous feats of Arabs in warfare. The other nine sections include some of the finest verses of several hundred Arab poets in various other subjects. The best Arabic edition of this anthology is the one including explanations and comments by al-Marzu:qi: who also wrote a famous introduction to it on the norms and conventions of C.A. poetry. It was edited by A. Amin and A. Harun, (Cairo, 1951), in 4 volumes. A.T.'s other anthology is the so-called al-Waħʃiyya:t or "the 'smaller' ħama:sah" ed. by A.M. Rajakuti and A.M. Shakir, Cairo, 1963.

characteristic features of A.T.'s style will be examined henceforth.

A.T., the classical poet, will be first dealt with [Chap. II, sect. 1]. In this connection, we shall see how the poet draws his themes from the stream of the classical tradition, and how each theme recurs in his work within the limits of poetic conventions. All this will be considered under what may be called "the poetic register" of C.A., and different aspects of this register will be briefly discussed. Then, two features characteristic of A.T.'s 'conformist' style will be examined, namely 'archaism' and 'dialectism' and their function in his poetry. In dealing with all these matters, the interest will be concentrated on showing the influence of the poetic tradition on A.T., his attitude towards its norms and the ways in which he manipulates the different elements of those norms.

Then, A.T. the 'innovator' will be introduced [Chap. II, sect. 2]. In fact, despite his adherence to the tradition, he considerably rejuvenated the existing reserves of Bedouin imagery, which grew stale and stereotyped in the works of other poets of his age. He skilfully combined archaism with metaphors, and complicated forms of speech with rhetorical embellishments from al-Badi:ε style. He loved curious and unusual imagery and far-fetched parallels which often made his verse incomprehensible, even to his own contemporaries. From this point of view, his work reflects perfectly the influence

of the Arabic Humanities on Arabic poetry in the Middle Ages: the Arab poet, in this period, became fond of the complex and the abstract, and found no more pleasure in the traditional parallels based on sensory perception. All those features marked A.T.'s work with a pronounced individual style to which many of his contemporaries were opposed. They will be all examined in relation to the concept of linguistic 'foregrounding' and its two major devices, namely 'parallelism' and 'deviation', which will be introduced in the second part of Chapter II.

CHAPTER II

CONFORMITY AND INNOVATION IN A.T.'S POETRY

As briefly dicussed in the introduction, Arabic poetic tradition in A.T.'s age tended to be crystallized into rules governing scope and means of expression, or ʔalfaːḍ, as well as prefigured patterns of topics, or maʕaːniː. The main task of the poet was the improved rendering of those patterns and their elaboration and modification within the neatly delimited constraints of authority. It is with this conformist aspect of A.T.'s work that we shall be dealing in the first part of this chapter.

I. The Trend of Conformity in A.T.'s Poetry

1. A.T. and the classical register

A.T.'s poetry may be divided into two parts:
- 'simple' compositions, or muqaṭṭaʕaːt (lit. fragments, short pieces), which focus on a single subject (e.g. love, meditation, wine). They are generally of a short length often not exceeding ten lines, and represent nearly 66% of his work [1];
- and poems which join together a number of ostensibly disparate loosely connected subjects, arranged in a sequence of set-pieces picked from a rather small inventory of themes (e.g. love, self-praise, praise of a donor, elegy,

1. J. Ben Cheikh: "Poétique Arabe", p. 106.

and the like). The poem, or qaşi:da, is generally longer[1] and more complex in its structure than the simple compositions, and it is in it (i.e. in the qaşi:da or the complex poem) that the weight of tradition on A.T. is mostly felt. In fact, he is primarily a classical poet who stands as a fervent disciple of a poetic tradition which goes as far back as the pre-Islamic era. He draws from a common fund of ideas which revolve around a number of general themes, simple, stereotyped and often associated with certain clichés.

The ancient qaşi:da, which developed in the Arabian peninsula and whose model the Arab poet of the IXth century A.D. had to follow in his compositions, exhibits signs of an extremely sophisticated literary tradition which was transposed soon after the Islamic expansion, as the capital of the Muslim empire shifted to Syria (with the Umayyads) and later to Iraq (with the Abbasids). With the rise of the philological schools and the intermixing with the newly converted people of different languages, it had gradually been accepted as an important source of data on the grammar and vocabulary of the Koran. This led to its acceptance as valuable from both an aesthetic and a scholarly point of view, and its formal characteristics provided the framework within which the poet had to exert his skill.

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1. Some qaşi:das in A.T.'s poetry contain over 60 lines each. For his contemporary Ibnu-r-Ru:mi:, some poems even exceed the 100 lines.

A traditional qaṣi:da, of which the panegyric constitutes a dominant type in A.T.'s age, is mainly characterized by its thematic diversity which has been the cause of much misunderstanding amongst some Western scholars [1]. It generally begins with an amorous opening scene (the so-called nasi:b section) which is designed to evoke nostalgia and sympathy on the part of the listener. This section contains the traditional scene of the poet standing in front of a desolate camp-site, the scene of a passionate but unfulfilled love affair, addressing it and sadly meditating upon its change, under the unfavourable course of time. Here, the poet might include the apostrophe to the blamers, who should practise 'moderation' (ʔiqtiṣa:d) and show more understanding of his state of mind. He then deplores the violence of his passion in order to gain the hearts of his audience. This section is the most highly stylized section of the poem, in which the poet demonstrates his technical skill and his right, in front of his audience, to a certain authority and excellency in the precise and subtle handling of a highly traditional material.

This section is usually followed by the description of a journey (or raḥi:l) through the desert, by horse

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1. There has been a tendency amongst Western scholars to underestimate the unity of the qaṣi:da and regard it as not being an organic whole. See for instance G.E.Von Grunebaum: "Arabic Poetics", in the "Indiana Conference On Oriental-Western Literary Relations", Bloomington, 1955, p. 32; R.A. Nicholson: "A Literary History of the Arabs, p. 78; etc. ...

or by camel, which is designed to establish the poet's merit as a man, as a member of a desert community, in addition to his merit as a poet. Here, he proceeds with a detailed description of his mount, and the landscape through which he is travelling occasionally receives a good deal of attention. Praises attached to the mount are reflected upon him, and a section of self-praise is often incorporated here, thus giving the poet the opportunity to celebrate such qualities as endurance, speed, tenacity, or complain about destiny and the severe 'injustice' of fate. These passages are often extremely intense and highly stylized.

Then the poet continues to the main body of the poem: the praise of the patron for whose sake he has undergone all the hardships of the travel. This section is the least rigid of the poem and may contain a considerable variety of material.[1]

In its various themes, qaṣi:da stands as a series of independent conventional occurrences which, in their relationships, embody the model of a particular view of the world and aim at its affirmation. It is nothing but "the stock of specific events to which poet after poet offers himself" [2]. In fact, it acquires its poetic significance only from being conceived as a ritual presentation of a variety of themes [3], as the expression of a

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1. In discussing the thematic arrangement of the traditional qaṣi:da in C.A., I have relied on Ibn Qutayba's much quoted account of this feature; see Ibn Qutayba: aʃ-ʃiɛru wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:2, Introd. pp. 20-21.

2. A. Hamori: "On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature", p.22.

3. A. Hamori discusses this feature in detail with regard to

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shared experience based on the replay of certain prototypal events which the model so successfully charted for many generations. In an important part of his compositions, A.T., like all qaşi:da poets, spoke in affirmation of this model.

The organization of material within the qaşi:da too has a 'ritualistic' aspect which accounts very much for its formal repetitiveness. Every theme has an organizing function within the poem and firmly secures its development towards its final purpose: the praise of the donor. A given theme is related to a set of formal elements to which the poet resorts during his act of creation. It appears as a sequence of repeated incidents and descriptive passages which one may call 'motifs', and whose function is to incarnate the various objects of a theme into the verbal reality of the qaşi:da. Thus, love is represented by the motifs of hope, fear, desire, parting, hardship and the like, while the praise of the ruler may include the motifs of generosity, wisdom, determination, fervour for God and so on. Each motif in turn is related to a relatively rigid scheme of expression, to a set of expressive units, smaller than the themes and more involved, due to their very nature and function, in the linguistic texture of the poetic discourse. They constitute the elements of the 'formulaic language' so characteristic of

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Footnote 3 continued from previous page

the pre-Islamic qaşi:da, Ibid., pp. 21-29, and the wine-song (or xamriyya), Ibid., pp. 73-77.

the classical qaṣi:da. In this way, a certain motif may be characterized by a particular type of lexical material or a set of syntactic and rhetorical devices which serve to present it: some words, a certain phrase, such and such a figure, all naturally appear in preference to others as soon as the poet resorts to a particular motif. Sometimes even, a word, an image or a phrase would act just like 'key-words' whose mere presence is enough to imply the motif in question.[1]

All this, of course, has nothing of mathematical rigour: themes, motifs and formulaic language (including key-words) all simply represent associative points whose number, on the one hand, and permanency, on the other, create a network of customary constraints and correspondences which determine to a great extent the poet's selection of his linguistic material. They constitute the 'poetic register' or 'catalogue' of C.A. However, those components are difficult to describe precisely with regard to every poetic genre, mainly because they shade into one another and have internal variations which could, if wished, lead to endless sub-classifications. On the other hand, conventional language in A.T.'s poetry crops up in poems that were obviously made with great care and attention to wording and structure. The poet's conformist trend tends, therefore, to hide behind a surface cover of an extremely rich

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1. The terms 'theme', 'motif', 'formulaic language' and 'key-words' have been borrowed from P. Zumthor: "Langue et Techniques Poétiques à l'Epoque Romane", pp. 123-178.

vocabulary and a skilful practice of stylistic embellishments. In fact, this is so much the case that it is the conventionality of the denotations that strikes us rather than the exact phrasing, even though stock phrases do occur.

To illustrate the preceding discussion, it is necessary to analyse in detail some qaṣi:das of A.T.'s and show the ways in which he made use of the inherited conventions of his art.

- Example one: Panegyric No. 111[1]

1. Faħwa:ka ɛaynun ɛala: najwa:ka ya: madilu:
   ħatta:ma la: yataqadda: qawluka-l-xaṭilu: ?
2. wa ʔinna ʔasmaja man taʃku: ʔilayhi hawan
   man ka:na ʔaħsana ʃayʔin ɛindahu-l-ɛadalu: ;
3. ma: ʔaqbalat ʔawjuhu-l-laddaːti sa:firatan
   mud ʔadbarat bi-l-Liwa: ʔayya:muna-l-ʔuwalu: .
4. ʔin ʃiʔta ʔalla: tara: ṣabran li-mustabirin,
   fa-ndur ɛala: ʔayyi ħa:lin ʔasbaħa-t-talalu: ,
5. ka ʔannama: ja:da mayna:hu fa-ɣayyarahu
   dumu:ɛuna: yawma ba:nu: wa-hya tanhamilu: ;
6. wa law tara:hum wa ʔiyya:na: wa mawqifana:
   fi: maʔtami-l-bayni li-stihla:lina: zajalu: ,
7. min ħurqatin ʔaṭlaqatha: furqatun ʔasarat
   qalban wa min ɣazalin fi: naħrihi ɛadalu: .

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1. A.T.'s poetry: vol. III, pp. 5-20, 47 lines, dedicated to the Caliph al-Muɛtaṣim. The items underlined in the text are those which belong to the classical register.

1. (Your talk reveals the truth that you are
   hiding [1], you the one who talks in secret;
   so when is your prattle to come to an end?
2. Verily, the most revolting person is he whose
   best [answer to] your love complaints is rebuke;
3. Pleasure has never come barefaced again[2] since
   our old days in Liwa: ran away.
4. If you want [to know the reason for my] im-
   patience, so look and see to what a state the
   camp-site has come;
5. It looks as though its site has been revived by
   our flowing tears, the day of their departure;
6. You should have seen them standing with us,
   weeping loudly in the scene of parting,
7. Because of a pain caused by [this] separation
   which fettered the heart and because of a love
   [engaged in a fight with] rebuke).

Revolving around the ʔaṭla:l motif (i.e. the description of the camp-site), nasi:b, or the amorous opening theme of the qaṣi:da, appears as a pure 'academic exercise'. The poet has nothing original to say about love and does not seem to even try to do so. The theme here is not a purpose in itself but only a starting-point, an 'introduction', an additional opportunity for the poet to exercise

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1. Literally, this part of the line would read as follows: "The meaning of your talk is an eye on your inside".

2. i.e. "good fortune did not smile on him any longer ..."; this is one of the usual stock phrases of the classical catalogue of Arabic.

his knowledge of the classical norms. It therefore proceeds with no surprises, starting with the customary discontented address to the rebuker in the usual conventional catalogue, and followed by a sad recollection of the past love affair. Throughout, a number of stock-phrases and key-words are present (e.g. qawluka-l-xaṭilu, i.e. your prattle; ʔayya:muna-l-ʔuwalu, i.e. our old days; ṭalalu, i.e. the camp-site; maʔtami-l-bayni, i.e. the scene of parting, etc.) and even the interpellation of the rebuker in line 1 is put formulaically.

This section is then followed by four lines of an erotic tone in which the poet meditates upon the beauty of his beloved ladies: they are 'fascinating' (faraγna li-s-siħri), like 'large-eyed antelopes' (baqarun ɛi:nun), with hips 'heavier than the sandhill' (ruka:mu-n-naqa:) and eyes 'blacker than kohl'. Then the poet immediately moves to the main purpose of the poem: the praise of the Caliph. The moral qualities ascribed to him correspond to a standardized set: ɛazm (resolution), ju:d (generosity), majd (nobility), ħazm (firmness) and many others are all developed with different combinations and variations, and the authority of the Caliph is depicted in the usual style, resting on the heroic virtues of the Arabs and the divine sanction of religion. Only occasional stylistic embellishments help to break up the conventionality of the poem and bring forward a line or two peculiar for an 'antithesis':

24. ʃarista bal linta bal qa:nayta da:ka bi-da: ,
fa-ʔanta la: ʃakka fi:ka-s-sahlu wa-l-jabalu:

(You are awesome yet flexible; doubtless you have gathered [the properties of both] the plain and the mountain),

an instance of syllabic and morpho-phonological parallelism:

29. min kulli muʃtaharin fi: kulli muɛtarakin
lam yuɛrafi-l-muʃtari: fi:hi wa la: zuħalu:
([The descendant of a dynasty whose] fame in the battle-field surpassed [in greatness] that of Jupiter and Saturn),

or a case of alliteration and repeated sound structure:

43. yaħmi:hi ħazmun li-ħazmi-l-buxli muhtaḍimun
ju:dan, wa ɛirdun li ɛirdi-l-ma:li mubtaḍilu:
(His caution was a prudence that scathed with charity the prudence of greed, and a dignity which sacrificed the dignity of wealth).

- Example two: Panegyric No. 123[1]

The nasi:b section expresses the loving pain of the poet. Once more, the poet has nothing new to add to the development of the theme; he begins by addressing the day of separation:

1. yawma-l-fira:qi laqad xuliqta ṭawi:la:
lam tubqi li: jaladan wa la: maɛqu:la: ;
2. law ħa:ra murta:du-l-maniyyati lam yurid
ʔilla-l-fira:qa ɛala-n-nufu:si dali:la: ;
3. qa:lu-r-raħi:lu fa-ma: ʃakaktu bi-ʔannaha:

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1. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. III, pp. 66-71, 30 lines, dedicated to a high-ranking official of the Abbasid society.

nafsi: ɛani-d-dunya: turi:du raħi:la: ;

4. ʔaṣ-ṣabru ʔajmalu, ɣayra ʔanna taladdudan
fi-l-ħubbi ʔaħra: ʔan yaku:na jami:la: ...

1. (The day of parting is verily made to be long;[1]
it has left no patience or reason with me;
2. If anyone is at a loss [in search] for a way
to death, his best guide will be [the effect of]
parting on souls;
3. [When] they called for departure, I had no
doubt that my soul wished to depart from this
world;
4. Equanimity might be worthwhile, but obstinacy
in love is certainly more so) ... ;

but he makes up for the lack of thematic originality by resorting to a series of alliterations and repeated sound structures (e.g. alliteration with /m/, /r/ and /d/ in line 2; raħi:lu/raħi:la: in line 3; ʔajmalu/jami:la: in line 4). Then he swiftly moves to the journey theme which provides him with the appropriate opportunity to meditate about life and destiny, and produce some of his best axiomatic verses, of which the following is most outstanding with its striking use of figurative language:

12. man ka:na marɛa: ɛazmihi wa humu:mihi
rawḍu-l-ʔama:ni: lam yazal mahzu:la: .
(he whose will and thoughts are fed in a
meadow of hopes is bound to remain ill-fated).

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1. lit. "Day of parting, verily, you are created to be long ..."

The four lines devoted to the description of the camel (lines 15-18) are characterized by an 'archaic'[1] tone based on an extensive use of conventional stock-phrases (e.g. maɛbaru qafratin, lit. the means for crossing the desert; bintu-l-faḍa:ʔi, lit. the daughter of space, i.e. the camel) and a specialized language related to the camel, with a number of strange 'unpolished' words picked up from the old bedouin catalogue (e.g. ʔibna-l-baydati-l-ʔijfi:la:, i.e. the male ostrich jumping with fright; taxid, i.e. She - the camel - throws out her forelegs; taʃʔa:, i.e. she outstripped; taɛajruf, the increase in swiftness, etc.). As the poet moves to the praise of the patron, his language becomes much more accessible to understanding and nothing occurs which might disturb the conformity of the piece.

- Example three: Panegyric No. 41[2]

This poem remained famous particularly for its sumptuous description of a she-camel. The nasi:b theme (line 1-11) opens with a question repeated six times in two lines giving them thereby a 'jerky' rhythm, which 'enacts' the poet's anxious search for his lost love:

1. ma: li-kaṯi:bi-l-ħima: ʔila: ɛaqidih ?
   ma: ba:lu jarɛa:ʔihi ʔila: jaradih ?
2. ma: xaṭbuhu ? ma: daha:hu ? ma: ɣa:lahu ?
   ma: na:lahu fi-l-ħisa:ni min xurudih ?

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1. Archaism, the use of old-fashioned, obscure, and 'unpolished' vocabulary will be further dealt with in this chapter, see pp. 66-81.

2. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, pp. 423-443, 60 lines.

1. (What happened to the sand-hill strong in its defence to drift away?
And to the sandy quarters to become desolate?
2. What is the matter with it? What happened to it? What made it perish?
What has become of it to be separated from its beautiful virgins?)

This introduction in fact follows the standard pattern. The physical description of the ladies (lines 6-9) enters into a steady continuous movement in which every line is firmly linked with the others. Here again, the poet gives a brilliant demonstration of his mastery of his art and its conventions. As soon as those premises of the poetic catalogue have been presented and the listener's sympathy gained, the poet brings in line 12:

12. sa-ʔxruqu-l-xarqa bi-bni xarqa:ʔa ka-l-
-hayqi ʔida: ma-staħamma fi: najadih
(I shall cleave through space with a camel
as brisk as the wind, like a male ostrich
soaking in his burning sweat).

Here, we have an example of rare purity of a line which contributes to the heightening of the poetic utterance by its unusual 'technical' vocabulary describing the camel, its unpolished sounds and its jerky rhythm which announces the arrival of line 14, also describing the mount:

14. ta:mikihi, nahdihi, muda:xalihi,
malmu:mihi, muħzaʔillihi, ʔajudih .
([With] a hump rising high, sturdy, strongly

built, compact in his joints, carrying his
head high, vigorous) ...

Having reached this extreme stage of a 'hammer-wrought' rhythm, of a lyricism at once descriptive and expressive by the sound qualities of its structure, the panegyric is introduced after a sequence of four lines which constitute a single sentence whose verb (sa-ʔaxruqu), occurring in line 12, finds its complement only in line 15 (lines 13 and 14 being a series of epithets describing the camel): this is a noteworthy instance of enjambment in A.T.'s poetry.

The praise of the patron continues with no 'surprises' until the end of the poem, by which time the poet has achieved his exercise of the traditional practice and proven his mastery of the conventions, which will gain him the admiration of his audience. To enliven the extreme conventionality of this long section, the poet resorts to various stylistic devices: alliteration (l. 25), parallelism between the hemistichs of one verse (l. 28), strong rhythmical correspondence (l. 30, 42, 44, 54), images, comparisons and metaphors (l. 20, 27, 37, 50, 60).[1]

- Example Four: Panegyric No. 22[2]

This is an example of the many poems where A.T. neglects the nasi:b opening of the qaṣi:da and starts immediately with the panegyric,[3] a practice which has been

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1. Each one of those devices will be further discussed and its effects analysed within the framework of 'parallelism' and 'deviation' to be introduced further in this chapter [see section II].
2. A.T.'s Poetry: Vol. I, pp. 282-290, 35 lines.
3. Another interesting example is his poem on the conquest of Ammorium (Vol. I, pp. 40-74, 71 lines), a piece to

/Continued over

encountered in poems of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic period[1] and, therefore, has not been condemned by the critics. This might reflect an attempt from the poet to rid himself sometimes of the strict norms of the traditional qaṣi:da, and follow in his compositions a pattern of his own. But even in this case, the influence of the classical register is still strong and the praise of the patron's generosity is put formulaically:

5. fa-tamma-l-ju:du maʃdu:da-l-ʔawa:xi: ,
wa-tamma-l-majdu maḍru:ba-l-qiba:bi: ,

6. wa ʔaxla:qun kaʔanna-l-miska fi:ha:
bi-ṣafwi-r-ra:ħi wa-n-nuṭafi-l-ɛiḍa:bi: ;

7. wa kam ʔaħyayta min ḍannin rufa:tin
biha: wa ɛamarta min ʔamalin xaḍra:bi:, .

8. yami:nu Muħammadin baħrun xiḍammun
ṭamu:ħu-l-mawji majnu:nu-l-ɛuba:bi: ,

9. tafi:ḍu sama:ħatan wa-l-muznu mukdin
wa taqṭaɛu wa-l-ħusa:mu-l-ɛaḍbu na:bi:

Footnote continued from previous page.

be treated entirely as one 'block' devoted to the description of a battle and a victory, and of which no motif can be considered as detached from the praise of the victor, the Caliph al-Muɛtaṣim. Another good example is the longest piece of his work, with 88 lines (Vol. III, pp. 132-145), describing the Caliph's victory on some rebels (the so-called al-xurramiyyah and their leader, Ba:bak). Both pieces illustrate a new form of the panegyric as a heroic poem celebrating a historical event, in which the amorous nasi:b section, by its very personal nature, would constitute a clash and thus would destroy the unity of the poem. On the other hand, A.T.'s elegies (e.g. Vol. IV, pp. 5-36, 64 lines), hardly different in style from the panegyric, are examples of the qaṣi:da based on a single theme.

1. See, for instance, al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. II, p. 291; Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. I, p. 231.

5. (And there, the loops[1] of generosity are fixed,
and the domes of glory set,
6. And manners as though their musk were [mixed]
with the limpidity of wine and freshness of
water;
7. Many is the time you / have lent life to dead
thoughts and restored ruined hopes!
8. Muhammad's right hand is a vast ocean [with]
towering waves and mad floods,
9. It flows with magnanimity while the rain cloud
is waterless, and cuts while the sharp sword
is blunt);

and the poem continues in this tone, undisturbed, giving the poet the opportunity to launch an attack against one of the patron's enemies (lines 10-13) and celebrate some of the old exploits of certain Arabian tribes (lines 23-28), thus reiterating in a new form the tribal function of the pre-Islamic qaṣi:da, before concluding with the praise of his own poetry (lines 29-35). This way of concluding his panegyrics has been systematically used by A.T. and the poets of his generation. It is in fact an extension in the same style of the panegyric, in which the poet glorifies his art, describes his rhymes and invites attention to his efforts.

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1. 'Loops', here, stands for the word ʔawa:xi: (plural of ʔa:xiyyah), a piece of rope of which the two ends are buried in the ground, with a small staff or stick, or a small stone attached thereto, a portion thereof, resembling a loop, being apparent or exposed, to which the beast is tied; see E.W. Lane: "Arabic-English Lexicon, Book I, part 1, p. 34, column one; see also Ibn Manḍu:r: "Lisa:nu-l-ɛarab", Vol. XIV, p. 23.

The examples just discussed illustrate the impact of tradition on A.T. and the ways in which some poems, most representative of his style, are organized. In whatever object he deals with, the rigid and restricting habits of the classical register are present, and the conformist trend of Arabic poetic language manifests itself.

It has been mentioned earlier that this repetitive tendency of the qaṣi:da may best be explained by its being conceived as a ritual, as a coherent complex of conventional acts which reflect a certain view of the world and speak in confirmation of a particular social order. One must remember in this connection that Arabic in A.T.'s age has been the organ of a particular social 'elite', the 'carriers' of a special cultural tradition which shows some preference towards particular forms of speech, especially those related to poetic expression. Accordingly, the language of the qaṣi:da may be regarded as an instance of a socially determined form of language, and our poet as an individual incorporated into a particular social organization in which he assumes a specific 'social role'. The chief condition and means of this incorporation are for him to learn to say what is expected of him to say under given circumstances. As J. Ben Cheikh puts it:

> "Le poète doit s'assimiler les modes de pensée et les latitudes idéologiques de cette classe [i.e. the dominating class, the 'elite'] ... Il est, parmi cette élite, 'en fonction'. La culture n'est pas 'descendue' à lui, il est parvenu à elle et, du coup, elle l'instrumentalise: il devient le manieur professionnel de formes littéraires qui lui sont imposées, il va se conformer à des modèles reçus dès sa

période de formation."[1]

In this way, one may understand how A.T.'s language tends to be well stereotyped and the components of the poetic 'catalogue' in his verse very narrowly conditioned by the conventions of his particular type of culture. In praise or in elegy, in love or in war, our poet, as a user of language, is in fact involved in a sort of roughly prescribed social ritual, in which he generally says what the others expect him, one way or the other, to say. The values which constitute the basis for his praise or blame of people, deeds and events are also well stereotyped. Viewed in a social perspective, his language may be regarded as

> "a range of possibilities, an open-ended set of options in behaviour that are available to [him] in his existence as a social man. The context of culture is the environment for the total set of these options, while the context of situation is the environment of any particular selection that is made from within them." 2

The context of culture therefore determines the potential, the range of possibilities that are open to the poet in dealing with his various themes (e.g. the camp-site motif, the journey theme, description of the lady's beauty, of the camel, of the desert, of the patron's generosity, etc.). Those themes form an integral part of the social order

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 51.

2. M.A.K. Halliday: "Explorations in the Functions of Language", p. 49; see also B. Malinowsky: "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Language", in C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards: "The Meaning of Meaning", Supplement I, pp. 296-336; J.R. Firth: "The Techniques of Semantics", in J.R. Firth: "Papers in Linguistics: 1934-51", pp. 7-33; see particularly pp. 29-33.

which the qaṣi:da extols, and offer themselves to the poet in specific 'patterns', in a set of repeated events and situations which, in turn, determine the actual selection that he makes.

It is the poet's involvement in routine situations which produces those stereotyped forms of language encountered in various sections of the qaṣi:da. In other words, because of the ritualistic function of the qaṣi:da, typical situations and events are in constant renewal. Those situations and events are related to a set of stock indications which have been judged as practically 'convenient' for artistic expression, and generally acknowledged, in the tradition, to be most effective in keeping alive the total organization of experience according to the classical model. In composing his verse, A.T., as a classical poet, tends to 'borrow' his text from those typical situations, thus applying the same formula to benefactor after benefactor, as is the case for instance in the following two lines [Vol. III, p. 61, l. 1-2]:

1. ya: ɛismati: wa muɛawwali: wa ṯima:li: ,
   bal ya: janu:bi: ɣaḍḍatan wa ʃama:li: ,
2. bal la?mati: ?alqa: biha: ħadda-l-waɣa:
   bal kawkabi: ?asri: bihi wa hila:li: .

1. (O my defence, my sustainer, and my protector,
   my fresh South-wind [which brings me wealth]
   and my North-wind [which helps me against my
   enemies],
2. [O] my armour with which I face the danger
   of war, my star and new moon which guide

my way [in the darkness of the night]),

where nearly every word is part of the stock phrases of the traditional panegyric. In the erotic sections as well, one finds him describing the beauty of his beloved in a style that is "conventional enough to contain no information at all" [1], and in phrases that "act by their presence alone" [1], so much are they predictable. The poet never attempts to discover an unknown aspect of the reality that he is dealing with, nor does he try to reveal new elements which might enrich it. With constant usage, his words and images have all lost their power of information to become merely 'signs' which just indicate the limits of a register and the impact of a tradition. In situations which are unceasingly renewed, the question for him is only to give a different 'dressing' of the same reality; he might sometimes have to invent new images (which he did so often, daringly and with considerable latitude), but his inventions were always secured by being sunk into common ground. In this way, the poetic rituals which the classical qaşi:da so often reiterated are kept alive, and as long as this model holds, the patron is delighted, our poet recognized and his poetry acclaimed.

2. 'Determination' and the poetic register in A.T.'s poetry

In this section, I shall be dealing briefly with a feature that has often occurred in A.T.'s poetry,

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1. Expressions used by A. Hamori: op.cit., p. 73.

particularly in the introductory sections of his poems (i.e. the erotic nasi:b and journey sections). In fact, it is not peculiar to his style alone, nor is it peculiar to the register of C.A. poetry in particular, but is rather typical of poetry in general and the ways in which it conveys its 'message'. It is a feature which has generally been overlooked by the rhetoricians and literary critics, mainly due to its nature which easily escapes observation. Dealing with it in relation to A.T.'s poetry seems to be necessary for it reflects an additional aspect of his relationship with poetic tradition and, more generally, sheds light on certain elements which oppose poetry and poetic language to prose.[1]

It has been recognized as 'poetical' by the Arabs to mention names of places, ladies and/other people in the introductory sections of the qaṣi:da: they constitute part of the poetic environment in which the poet is involved, and form the elements of the poetic situation with which he is dealing. As a classical poet, A.T. has not generally deviated from this trend. Thus, one of his panegyrics begins with the following three lines [Vol. I, pp. 116-117, l. 1-3]:

1. ʔayyu marɛa: ɛaynin wa wa:di: nasi:bi:
   laħabathu-l-ʔayya:mu fi: malħu:bi: !
2. mullikathu-ṣ-ṣaba-l-walu:ɛu fa-ʔal-
   -fathu qaɛu:da-l-bila: wa suʔra-l-xuṭu:bi: ;

1. In the discussion of this feature, I am very much indebted to J. Cohen: "Structure du Langage Poétique", pp. 155-163.

3. nadda ɛanka-l-ɛaza:ʔu wa qa:da-d-
-damɛa min muqlatayka qawda-l-jani:bi: .

1. (What a pasture for the eye and a valley for romance has been smitten with time in Malħu:b!
2. The greedy East-wind has reigned [there] and left it as a mount for decay and a reminder of misfortuntes;
3. [Your] composure has left you and led the tears from your eyes like a tractable mount).

In this example, the love section starts with the description of the camp-site: although desolate, it is a familiar spot to the poet, it is located and has a name (Malħu:b) on which, al-Maɛarri: mentions the following comments: "Malħu:b [is] a name of a place which often occurs in poetry" [1]. In other poems, A.T. mentions different names of places: al-ɛaqi:q [Vol. I, p. 92, l. 1], Da:tu-l-ʔada: [Vol. II, p. 301, l. 2], or 'somewhere' between al-Liwa: and ʃurbub [Vol. I, p. 95, l. 6]. Sometimes, the name of the place is related to his beloved: e.g. da:ru Ma:wiyyah, i.e. Ma:wiyya's place [Vol. I, p. 177, l. 1], ʔaṭla:lu Hind, i.e. the encampments of Hind [Vol. II, p. 59, l. 1], etc. Sometimes also, the location tends to be undetermined, and the poet tries to make up for this by addressing the camp-site directly, using a first person possessive adjective, as is the case in the following line [Vol. I, p. 201, l. 7]:

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1. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 116, al-Maɛarri:'s comments on line 1.

ʔa-mayda:na lahwi: man ʔata:ħa laka-l-bila:
fa-ʔaṣbaħta mayda:na-ṣ-ṣaba: wa-l-jana:ʔibi: ?
(Who caused your decay, O field of my pleasure,
so that you became a field for East and South
winds?),

or by simply calling it ṭalala-l-jami:ɛ (lit. the encampment where all the tribe had once lodged) [Vol. I, p. 405, l. 1]. Examples of this feature are so frequent in A.T.'s work that one is interested to know the effect of these names in the poem and the factors which direct the poet's selection of this or that particular name.

Answering these questions seems to be difficult especially when no accurate information on the matter has been provided by the classical references. It is obvious that the selection of a particular name is closely determined by the necessities of metre, rhyme and the other devices which the poet exploits in his verse. This has been pointed out in fact by al-Maɛarri: when he said that

> "it is possible that the poet invents names of non-existing [people] to use them in the rhyme or in the middle of the line ... Those names are likely to belong to existing [people], but it is not unlikely that they are completely non-existing, because poetry is known for this."[1]

Al-Jurja:ni:, in turn, makes similar remarks, but in connection with another instance of names of places very frequent in the classical register, namely when the poet compares the eyes of his beloved to those of the gazelles

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1. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, pp. 311-312, al-Maɛarri:'s comments on line 1.

of Ja:sim or the antelopes of Wajra. According to al-Jurja:ni:, the poet can easily do without those names and locations if it were not for metre, rhyme and the completion of the line [1]. But it is also a feature necessitated by the poet's wish to accomplish a certain parallelism between the two hemistichs of the line, as is the case in the previous example:

> ʔa-mayda:na lahwi: man ʔata:ẖa laka-l-bila:
> fa-ʔasbaẖta mayda:na-ṣ-ṣaba: wa-l-jana:ʔibi:?
> (Who caused your decay, O field of my pleasure,
> so that you became a field for East and South
> winds?),

where the poet parallels between mayda:na lahwi:, in the first half, and mayda:na-ṣ-ṣaba: wa-l-jana:ʔibi:, in the second one. It may also be necessitated by his wish to accomplish some alliteration based on the repetition of individual sounds, as in the following example [Vol. I, p. 356, l. 1, the first hemistich]:

> saʕidat ɣarbatu-n-nawa: bi-suʕa:di
> (Remoteness has been [amply] pleased with
> Suʕa:d ...),

where Suʕa:d, the name of the lady, has been chosen to 'echo' the sounds of the verb saʕida (i.e. to be pleased) introducing the line.

However accurate this explanation might be, the

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1. al-Jurja:ni: "al-Wasa:ṭah", Vol. I, pp. 33-34; see p. 33, in particular, where he gives some examples from the works of pre-Islamic poets.

frequent occurrence of this feature in A.T.'s poetry and the classical register must be due to other reasons than the simple necessity to comply with the rules of metre and rhyme, or to fulfil some rhetorical devices. In fact, and as will be shown shortly, such a feature stands in poetry to serve for a specific function peculiar not only to Arabic poetry, but to poetry in general, as a work which, though originally made to be recited in specific situations, has become nowadays a literary type to be read just like a novel or any other work of prose literature.

To analyse this feature properly, it is worthwhile to consider it in connection with the use of pronouns, possessives, locatives and demonstratives, which are also frequently encountered in the beginnings of A.T.'s poems. Thus, in the following lines [Vol. II, pp. 423/424, l. 1-3]:

1. dari:ni: minki sa:fiñata-l-ma?a:qi:
   wa min saraɛa:ni ɛabratiki-l-mura:qi: ,
2. wa taxwi:fi: nawan ɛaruḍat wa ṭa:lat,
   fa-buɛdu-l-γa:yi min ñaḍḍi-l-ɛita:qi: ,
3. wa qarrib ?anta tilka fa-?inna hamman
   ɛara:ni: bi-ʃtija:rin wa-rtifa:qi: .

1. (Leave [imp. 2nd pers. fem. sing.] me alone, you the one crying out your eyes and [stop] your flowing tears,
2. [Stop] warning me against [the sufferings of] a long far away journey, for [seeking] high goals [is] the privilege of noble mounts;
3. And you [2nd pers. masc. sing.], make those

[i.e. the camels] trot [faster] for my [heart]
is filled with sorrow) [1],

the poet starts by addressing a lady - probably the beloved, whom he is leaving in this case - then a second person, a man - probably his companion in the journey. The camels are referred to only by a demonstrative (tilka, i.e. those), combined with the verb qarrib (i.e. to make the camel do the taqri:b, a special trotting rhythm peculiar to this animal).

This particular way of switching in language from masculine to feminine, from a second person to a third, from singular to plural or vice versa, is a stylistic device known in Arabic rhetoric as ʔiltifa:t[2] (i.e. sudden transition). Considered in isolation, a sentence like:

([Stop] warning me against [the sufferings of]
a long far away journey),

occurring in line 2 above, seems to be quite correct. However, to function normally, it requires the presence of an element which always occurs in spoken language, but happens to be omitted in poetry, probably by a deliberate deficiency which constitutes in fact the very essence of this feature.

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1. Literally, the second part of 1.3 would be rendered as follows: "... for I am possessed by a sorrow which keeps me sleepless".

2. Ibnu-l-ʔati:r: "al-Maṯalu-s-Sa:ʔir", Vol. II, p. 4, defines it as follows: "ʔiltifa:t, [which] is literally the act of a person who turns right and left ..., is this type of utterance in which the speaker shifts from one form to another, such as the transition from addressing a second person to a third person, from a third to a second, from past to future or future to past ...". He discusses this feature with a great amount of examples and details in Vol. II, pp. 4-18. It is the commentator al-Maʿarri: who points out the presence of this feature in those lines by A.T., but he fails to analyse its poetic effect; see his comments on line 3 in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, p. 424.

In any language, there is a class of units which Jespersen calls 'shifters' and defines as "a class of words ... whose meaning differs according to the situation" [1]. Personal pronouns constitute a typical example of 'shifters'. Thus, "I" in the language stands for the speaker. By opposition to the noun which designates a particular individual, "I" may be applied to anyone. It is necessary therefore, in order to clear this 'ambiguity', to know who is the origin of the message. In spoken language, this information is provided by the situation: the origin of the message is the "I", the speaker himself; this is established by a conventional rule which associates the pronoun "I" with the "speaker". As an instance of 'shifters', personal pronouns function simultaneously as 'symbols' and 'indexes'; indeed, as Jakobson explains it:

> "d'un côté, le signe "Je" peut représenter son objet sans lui être associé 'par une règle conventionnelle', et dans des codes différents, le même sens est attribué à des séquences différentes, telles que "Je", "ego", "ich", "I", etc.: donc "Je" est un symbole. D'un autre côté, le signe "Je" ne peut représenter son objet s'il n'est pas 'dans une relation existentielle' avec cet objet: le mot "Je" désignant l'énonciateur est dans une relation existentielle avec l'énonciation, donc il fonctionne comme un index." 2

This is not the case, however, with our poems which are written. A written text is 'out of situation' and therefore, it is in the message itself that one must seek the information about what elements of the context

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1. O. Jespersen: "Language", p. 123.

2. R. Jakobson: "Essais de Linguistique Générale", p. 179.

a given pronoun is referring to. J. Cohen rightly notes that it is in the written text that a 'pro-noun' really replaces the noun, but this may be done only if such a noun has already occurred in the context. He also notes that while a letter necessarily bears the signature of its author, and the "I" of a novel refers to a fictitious individual who is nevertheless presented and given a name in that novel, the "I" of a poem remains without any 'contextual reference' [1]. Of course, the poem is also 'signed', it belongs to the poet, in our case A.T. But this is too easy an answer to be accepted. Still, if one concedes that the pronoun "I" refers to the poet himself, how on the other hand are we to treat cases where different pronouns are used? Who is the second person addressed in the second line of the following example [Vol. I, p. 157, l. 1-2]?

1. min saja:ya-ṭ-ṭulu:li ʔalla: tuji:ba:
   fa-ṣawa:bun min muqlatin ʔan taṣu:ba: ,
2. fa-sʔalanha: wa-jɛal buka:ka jawa:ban ,
   tajidi-ʃ-ʃawqa sa:ʔilan wa muji:ba: .

1. (It is natural for the vanishing traces of tents not to reply, and right for the eye to flow [with tears],
2. So [if] you ask them [about the people who set out], your cries will be the [only] answer, [and] you will find that longing is [doing both:] asking and replying)[2].

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1. J. Cohen: op.cit., p. 157.
2. Line 2 of this example illustrates an aspect of A.T.'s search for intricate conceits and preference of complex thoughts: he first notes that the desolate camp-site is unable to 'answer any queries'; yet the lover's feelings

/Continued over

And who are the two people addressed by the poet in this line [Vol. I, p. 264, l. 1]?

ʔinna buka:ʔan fi-d-da:ri min ʔarabih ,

fa-ʃa:yiɛa: muγraman ɛala: ṭarabih .

(to cry in the [abandoned] camp-site is his desire, so join [imp. dual] the lover in his pleasure) .

In the tradition, we are informed that those two are the friends of the lover, the poet; this has been so much a convention amongst the poets in their love-theme introductions that only a pronoun may be used to refer to them without any previous mention in the poem [1]. However, they still remain 'unnamed' and have no 'identity', just like their addressor who is unnamed too.

In other cases, the person addressed is not a friend but a severe rebuker, sometimes one, sometimes many, sometimes a man and other/ a lady, as is the case in the following line [Vol. I, p. 146, l. 1]:

taqi: jamaħa:ti: lastu ṭawɛa muʔannibi: ,

wa laysa jani:bi: ʔin ɛadalti bi-musħibi: .

(Be careful of my repulse [for] I do not obey my rebuker, and my heart will not yield to your blame);

Footnote 2 continued from previous page.

urge him to ask, which he does, but only for his cries - the expression of his sadness - to be the answer.

1. See comments on this line in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 264.

who is this lady? and who is the first person to which those pronouns are referring in this line? The answer to all these questions is well presented by E. Souriau; according to him, the "I" is

> "à la fois un poète essentiel et absolu, et aussi l'image poétisée de lui-même que le poète veut donner au lecteur. C'est même le lecteur lui-même en tant qu'il s'introduit dans le poème à une place qu'on lui prépare, pour participer aux sentiments qu'on lui a suggérés." 1

The "I" therefore does not refer to one speaker only. Its meaning on the contrary happens to be 'shifted' so that it acquires a new significance and, according to different situations, refers to different persons. However, to function in this way, it requires the presence of a referent, which the poetic message cannot provide because it is 'out of situation'. As a result, the poetic message departs from the norms of the language and breaks its conventions which make it impossible for a given pronoun to function normally without being in a direct relationship with its referent. Yet the poet is using his language normally and the grammar of his verse remains perfectly correct. The absence in the poetic context itself of the referent concerned by the linguistic code transforms the latter (i.e. the code) and provides it with a new power: nowhere in the lexicon can one find a word for the 'essential and absolute poet'; the present

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1. E. Souriau: "Correspondance des Arts", p. 149, quoted by J. Cohen: op.cit., p. 158.

feature, however, succeeds in creating one.

The same may be said concerning the use of the other pronouns. Together with the 'essential and absolute poet', there are 'essential and absolute' rebukers, friends and companions in the journey, all of them being the result of the poet's invention and part of his traditional world. Being an 'addressor', an "I", the poet needs 'addressees' as well as a world to speak about. It is in this way that other pronouns are brought in with names of people, locations and a detailed description, all meant to give the reader the necessary information about the subject in question. But used as such, and with the absence, in the poetic context, of their referents, those elements are unable to function normally, as J. Cohen explains it:

> "Le poème est écrit, mais il feint d'être parlé. Il déroge par là même à une règle générale de la stratégie du discours. Le discours est tenu de fournir au destinataire l'ensemble des informations que celui-ci requiert. Mais par souci d'économie, le parleur supprime les informations que son interlocuteur peut déduire de la situation. Le poème fait de même à ceci près que cette fois la situation est absente. Dès lors, tous les mots qui sont faits pour déterminer deviennent incapables de remplir leur fonction. Ils désignent sans désigner ..."[1]

The poetic treatment of 'determination' in space and time in A.T.'s poetry may be the object of similar remarks. It is in fact a point which deserves a fully independent analysis, but only a few remarks will be made

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1. J. Cohen: op.cit., p. 159.

about it here. Time adverbials like γadan (i.e. tomorrow), laya:lin ka:nat lana: (i.e. days ago), or locative adverbials such as 'here', 'there' and other ways of locating events, also belong to that category of 'shifters' distinguished by O. Jespersen, and are frequently encountered in the introductory sections of A.T.'s poems. The word γadan (i.e. tomorrow), for instance, in A.T.'s line [Vol. II, p. 10, l.2]:

qa:lu-r-raħi:lu γadan la: ʃakka, qultu lahum :
ʔal-yawma ʔayqantu ʔanna-sma-l-ħima:mi γadu: .
([When] they said that departure is definitely tomorrow, I told them: today, I knew for certain that the name of death is tomorrow),

normally refers to the day following the one at which the message has been sent out; but the poem is 'out of situation', and in the absence of a situation, it is the context which should provide us with the information required, a requirement which, once again, the poem does not meet. As a result, those words introduced to determine a precise day or a specific location would refer to all days and locations as well as to none. By the use which the poet makes of them, their function is reversed and becomes one of 'indetermination'.

The use of proper names in the introductory sections of the poem follows the same pattern and gives birth to the same feature. Since a proper name designates anyone who carries it [1], it can assume its proper

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1. R. Jakobson: op.cit., p. 177.

that person
function only if / has already been presented in the utterance either effectively, through the context, or by means of a 'description' (in the logical sense of the term) contained in the message itself [1]. However, this is not the case in A.T.'s poetry and, more generally, in the classical register. A poem by A.T. begins with someone (the speaker, i.e. the poet or, indirectly, even the reader himself), in a location which tends to be very determinate since its name is often mentioned and it looks familiar to the poet. It used to be the place where particular ladies used to live (e.g. Zaynab and Raba:b [Vol. I, p. 75, l.2], Tuma:ḍir and Laʿu:b [Vol. I, p. 158, l.7], or ʔurwiyyah [Vol. I, p. 239, l. 1], etc.). Apart from the names, which make all this world appear so familiar to us, readers, no information is given about those who carry them. To know the real identity of those ladies and those locations to which we are taken is impossible in the absence of a situation, and the poetic context can be of no help in this task either, for their description, if it occurs, enters the traditional pattern fixed by the poetic conventions. As a result, one will find that those names refer to specific persons and locations as well as to none. Zaynab, for instance, is not a specific lady whom the poet knows and whose real identity he seeks to hide from us, nor is Zaynab a name which stands for any lady. Zaynab, to use E. Souriau's expression once more, is an 'essential

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1. J. Cohen: op.cit., p. 162.

and absolute lady'. In this way, A.T.'s poetry and, through him, all the poetry of C.A., is made such as it strikes with 'indefiniteness' the humans and things which make its universe. It is from such a feature that an impression of vague and obscure reality is created, a reality which belongs to the very essence of poetic language.

3. Archaism in A.T.'s poetry

Archaism, as a feature of literary and especially poetic style (for it was originally connected with metre), is commonly connected with that set of old forms of words which, by their different number of syllables, present an advantage, in a metrical context, over their modern counterparts[1]. Archaism, in this section, is used in a different meaning to cover that set of old Arabic vocabulary, conserved in the tradition, but which fell into disuse to become 'obscure' (ɣari:b), 'strange' and 'wild' (ħu:ʃi:).

With regard to A.T.'s poetry, this feature has been typical of his style. In fact, he has been very often criticized for resorting to old forms of Arabic, to disused and hence, obscure vocabulary. According to al-ʔa:midi:, "he was resorting to [obscure language] and made a purpose of using it in his poetry" [2], a tendency

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1. See: "Archaism" in A. Preminger (ed.): "Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics", p. 47, col. 2

2. Al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, p. 282; see also Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ʕumdah", Vol. II, p. 266.

which was not accepted from a poet who lived in the city and knew the luxury and delicacy of civilization. Such has been the belief of the Arab critics who repeatedly tried to specify the kind of language to be used in poetry. They warned the poets particularly against the use of ɣari:b (obscure) and ħu:ʃi: (strange, wild) language. Al-Ja:ħiḍ, for instance, said:

> "[As] just as the word must not be too common, base and vulgar, similarly, it must not be obscure or unusual, unless the speaker is a bedouin from the desert, for 'unpolished' language [waħʃi:, lit. wild] can be understood only by people [who speak it]." 1

Consequently, the poets generally avoided this language and were reluctant to use it in their works. Once asked whether he used unusual vocabulary in his compositions, the poet as-Sayyidu-l-ħimyari: replied:

> "it would be considered as faltering in my time, and as affectation on my part if I did; I have been granted a natural gift and a broad knowledge of speech [which enable me] to say what the elderly and the youngster [may] understand without any need for explanation." 2

Obscure language therefore became a mark of 'inelegance' and, for this reason, a poet from the city was required to avoid it as much as possible. This was explained by al-Jurja:ni: who said:

> "it is in the nature of desert life to develop such [a phenomenon]. ... Thus, you find the poetry of ɛadiyy - who is a pre-Islamic poet - easier to understand than the poetry of

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1. Al-Ja:ħiḍ: "al-Baya:n wa-t-Tabyi:n", Vol. I, p. 144, also reported in Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah" , Vol. I, p. 133.

2. Al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 61.

> al-Farazdaq and the rajaz of Ruʔbah - both of whom are [post-Islamic] bedouins. This is because ɛadiyy has always lived in the city, away from the 'inelegant' [life] of the bedouins and the 'unpolished' language spoken by the Arabs of the desert." 1

Al-Jurja:ni: takes his statement even further to establish an interesting connection between the poet's environment and his language on the one hand, and between his language and moral qualities on the other [2].

Ibnu-l-Muɛtazz, a poet and critic contemporary of A.T., also devoted a section of his epistle on the "Beauty and Defects of A.T.'s poetry" to the treatment of archaism as used by our poet. He emphasized particularly the lack of 'harmony' which affects the language of a poem when it combines an ordinary poetic vocabulary with strings of unusual words, obscure, and 'unpolished', which he called ɣari:b. Then he concluded by saying:

> "In this vocabulary, we have only denounced the fact that it belongs to the rejected ɣari:b [language] which ought not to be used by contemporary [poets], for it does not occur with [a vocabulary] of its kind, nor is it followed [in their poems] by the like of it. It seems thereby as if it suffered exile in their language." 3

This statement by Ibnu-l-Muɛtazz raises an interesting point related to archaism. In fact, the Arabs seem to have divided archaic language into two categories: the acceptable and the unacceptable. But their criteria

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1. al-Jurja:ni: "al-wasa:ṭah", p. 18; see also al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, p. 286.

2. al-Jurja:ni: "al-wasa:ṭah", p.18.

3. Reported in: al-Marzuba:ni: "al-Muwaʃʃaħ", p. 476.

in making this distinction have not always been clear, nor have they been accurately applied in all cases. Thus, while they condemn the use of such categories of words which show some discord in their sounds or a certain 'heaviness' due to their constituent phonemes, of similar or close points of articulation (e.g. mustaʃ--zira:tun [1], i.e. rising high; jatja:t [2], i.e. the name of a sweet-smelling plant) [3], they do not explain on the other hand why another class of archaic vocabulary - whose components they do not mention in detail - has been considered as acceptable [4]. They agree, however, that a poet is entitled to resort to linguistic 'rarities' - particularly in the vocabulary - if they were to help him in solving such problems as those of metre and rhyme. But this licence should be used only sparingly.

Archaic language (i.e. obscure and disused vocabulary) is therefore an aesthetic defect of which the Arab scholars have generally disapproved. However,

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1. Used by the famous pre-Islamic poet Imru?ul-qays in his muʿallaqa (i.e. one of the seven pre-Islamic odes), l. 35; see Ibnu-l-?anba:ri: "ʃarħu-l-muʿallaqa:ti-s-Sabʿ", p. 63.

2. Used by A.T. in the rhyme of one of his verses, Vol. I, p. 312, l. 4.

3. Note, here, the sequence st-ʃz-r-t in the first word, and the repeated sequence j-t-j-t, in the second one.

4. For more details on this matter, see as-Suyu:ṭi: "al-Muzhir", Vol. I, pp. 185-188; ʿabdu-l-qa:hir al-Jurja:ni: "?asra:ru-l-Bala:ɣah", Vol. I, pp. 98-99; Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ʿumdah", Vol. II, pp. 265-266 and Vol. I, p. 128.

one finds A.T. largely resorting to it in his work, thus giving his critics the opportunity to attack his poetry, deny his skill and accuse him of literary affectation and mannerism.

As an anthologist, A.T.'s long acquaintance with ancient Arabic poetry has in fact left a great impact on his own compositions and provided him with a broad knowledge of 'old-fashioned' vocabulary and forms of Arabic which fell into disuse in his age, following the cultural development of the Muslim empire. In a way, archaism represents an instance of the conformist tendency of his trend. Thus, one notes that this feature is mostly profuse in the introductory sections of his poems, in the amorous nasi:b openings, including the description of the camp-site and the journey through the desert. Those are the most traditional themes of the classical qaṣi:da, those which were strictly controlled by conventions, and their treatment by our poet has often been dealt with in a strongly archaic language. This is the case for instance in his panegyric No. 29 [Vol. I, pp. 311-322] which opens with the following lines:

1. qif bi-ṯ-ṯulu:li-d-da:risa:ti ɛula:ṯa:
   ʔamsat ħiba:lu qaṭi:nihinna riṯa:ṯa:[1];
3. ...fa-taʔabbadat min kulli muxṭafati-l-ħaʃa:
   ɣayda:ʔa tuksa: ya:raqan wa raɛa:ṯa: ,
4. ka-ḏ-ḏabyati-l-ʔadma:ʔi ṣa:fat fa-rtaɛat

1. The items underlined in the text are those which form part of the archaic vocabulary of C.A. and have become obscure and disused in the age of A.T. Many of them, it should be noticed, enter into sets of 'formulaic expressions' (e.g. see lines 1 and 7).

zahara-l-ɛara:ri-l-ɣaddi wa-l-jatja:ta: ,

5. ħatta: ʔida daraba-l-xari:fu riwa:qahu
sa:fat bari:ra ʔara:katin wa kaba:ta: .

7. ...za:lat bi-ɛaynayka-l-ħumu:lu kaʔannaha:
naxlun mawa:qiru min naxi:li juwa:ta: ;

10. ...wa raʔayta dayfa-l-hammi la: yarda: qiran
ʔilla: muda:xilata-l-faqa:ri dila:ta: ,

11. ʃajɛa:ʔa jirratuha-d-dami:lu talu:kuhu
ʔusulan ʔida: ra:ħa-l-matiyyu ɣira:ta: ,

12. ʔujudan ʔida: wanati-l-maha:ra: ʔarqalat
raqalan ka-taħri:qi-l-ɣaḍa: ħatħa:ta: ,

13. talabat fata: Juʃami-bni Bakrin Ma:likan
dirɣa:maha: wa hizabraha-d-dilha:ta: .

1. (Stop at the trampled and bare encampment site,
ɛula:t, [and see how] the bonds with its ladies
have become worn out;

3. ...[This site] is grieving by the absence of
ladies who bewilder the hearts [with their] long
and graceful necks and elegant jewels,

4. [Of ladies] like fine white gazelles, in the
summer, grazing the sweet-smelling branches of
luxuriant ɛara:r and jatja:t,[1]

5. [or] breathing in the fresh smell of the fruits
of the arak[2] tree, in the autumn.[3]

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1. ɛara:r and jatja:t are two kinds of aromatic sweet-smelling plants. While the first one is often mentioned in C.A. poetry, the second one is rare and seems to have been necessitated by rhyme in this case.

2. arak is a shrub or small tree growing in the drier portions of India and Persia as well as in Arabia. It is well-known for its aromatic flavour, and is particularly used by women to scrub their teeth.

3. lit. "... when autumn takes up quarters".

7. ...From your sight, their burdens disappeared
[the day they left]; they looked like the palm-
trees of Juwa:t [1], weighed down with dates;

10. ...And you knew that care, whenever it comes
[upon you], can be relieved only by [riding]
a she-camel, strongly built in her frame,
ready to face toil,

11. Stout and sturdy, for whom a swift pace is
[like] the cud which she chews under the
gathering shade of night, at the time when other
mounts are exhausted and starved;

12. A vigorous [she-camel] who travels swiftly
like a fire [streaming through] dry thorn-
bushes, while noble mares get weary,

13. Heading towards Malik, the hero of Juʃam Ibn
Bakr, and their lion, strong and bold ...)

Throughout, the poet has nothing new to say about love, separation, or about the ladies and the she-camel whose description follows the traditional pattern. However, the whole passage is dominated by linguistic archaism, and nearly every word in each line is strongly marked by an archaic overtone. Thus, in line 3, to describe the ladies' jewels, the poet uses two words, of rare occurrence in poetry, one of which is of non-Arabic origin (ya:raq), while the other one, occurring in the rhyme, is

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1. Juwa:t is an oasis well-known for its luxuriant growth of palm-trees and dates.

an obscure term for earrings (raɛa:ta:).[1] Line 5, in turn, is marked by a strong opposition between a first hemistich, easy and 'straightforward' because of the use of a common formulaic expression denoting the arrival of autumn (ħatta: ʔiḍa: ḍaraba-l-xari:fu riwa:qahu), and a second hemistich, made obscure by the use of two apparently technical terms related to the fruits of the arak tree (namely bari:r, i.e. the fresh fruit of the arak tree, and kaba:t, i.e. this fruit when it begins to lose its juice). The two words are preceded by another one, equally obscure (sa:fat, i.e. to breathe in) which could have easily been replaced by the more common, but perhaps less poetical, ʃammat of the same meaning and syllabic structure.[2]

Line 10 ensures a smooth transition to the journey theme which goes on for three lines all devoted to the description of the she-camel. Here again, the language of the poet is dominated by the use of an extremely technical vocabulary describing the camel, with a number of strange words and 'ringing' sounds. The movement created by the irruption of such a type of language is so pronounced that it goes beyond the description of the camel to cover line 13, the first of the panegyric proper, whose second half is made up of three words, equally uncommon, related to the 'lion' (ḍirγa:m, hizabr, dilha:t, i.e. a strong and bold lion), and forming the first 'motif' used by the poet

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1. see al-Maɛarri:'s comments on this line in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 312.

2. See comments on this line, Ibid., p. 313.

in the praise of the patron. As he proceeds with the panegyric, his language becomes easier and more common, and the amount of archaic vocabulary hardly noticeable.

Another interesting example of the same feature, is his panegyric dedicated to one of the Caliph's army generals,[1] known for his bedouin origins and his great passion for bedouin life in all its aspects. This poem, full of archaism and old Arabic vocabulary, perfectly illustrates how the impact of the poet's social relationship with his audience is often determinant of the type of language that he uses in his own compositions. In other words, this poem, as an instance of linguistic expression, strongly reflects, in its archaic form, the social bonds which used to relate the poet to his addressee and, as a result, must have played an important role in determining the particular tone of the piece. As in the preceding example, this one begins with the poet meditating on a past love affair before moving to the description of the ladies' beauty:

3. budu:ru layli-t-tima:mi ħusnan ,
   ɛi:nu ħuqu:fin ḍiba:ʔu mi:ṯi: ;
4. bayna-l-xala:xi:li wa-l-ʔasa:wi: -
   -ri wa-d-dama:li:ji wa-r-ruɛu:ṯi: ;
5. min kulli ruɛbu:batin taradda:
   bi-ṯawbi fayna:niha-l-ʔaṯi:ṯi: ,

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1. Abu-l-Muγi:ṯ Ibnu Mu:sa-r-Ra:fiqi:, panegyric No. 30, Vol. I, pp. 323-328, 28 lines.

6. ka-r-raʃaʔi-l-ɛawhaji-t-ṭaba:hu
rawɛun ʔila: muγzilin raγu:ṭi: ...

3. (... [with ladies comparable to] the full moon in its beauty, [to] the antelopes of the rough sand-ridges [and] the gazelles of the valleys [in their large eyes];

4. In their anklets, their bracelets, wristlets and earrings;

5. Yea, each lady beautiful, white and delicate, [as] in/a/gown in her profusely growing hair,

6. [Looking] like a gazelle-fawn, tall in his neck, running afraid to an antelope breast-feeding her youngling ...);

from the first line of the nasi:b theme (l. 3), one is faced with a strongly bedouin language which very much recalls the old models of Arabic poetry with their typical formulaic expressions (e.g. ɛi:nu ħuqu:fin, i.e. large-eyed antelopes of the rough sand-ridges; ḍiba:ʔu mi:ṭi, i.e. the gazelles of the valleys), unusual vocabulary (e.g. dama:li:j, wristlets; ruɛu:ṭ, earrings) and uncommon words, made up of odd combinations of sounds (e.g. the first half of line 6).

The section devoted to the journey theme is equally marked by a pronounced degree of archaic vocabulary and technical terms related to the camel. The following lines illustrate very well how A.T., a city poet, has acquired a perfect mastery of the 'unpolished' language of the desert [Vol. I, p. 325]:

12. min kulli ṣulbi-l-qara: maɛu:jin ,
wa kulli ɛayra:natin dalu:ṯi:
13. di: mayɛatin maʃyuhu-d-difaqqa:
wa ḏa:ti lawṯin biha: malu:ṯi:

12. (with a sturdy [camel], brisk in his walk,
strongly built and ready to face toil,
13. swift of pace, throwing out his forelegs,
with vigour [showing] on all his body);

as in the preceding example, the poet's description of his mount is stereotyped and follows the standard pattern: the qualities which he praises in the animal are more or less the same, and only a few changes are introduced.[1] However, the obscure and highly archaic language which he uses gives the description an air of strange novelty and provokes into the reader the impression that the object described is unfamiliar to him.

As he shifts to the praise section of the poem, his language becomes relatively easier, but archaic expressions are still encountered, and the patron's qualities are lauded in a strongly bedouin style [Vol. I, pp. 326-327]:

19. ʔin tastabiṯhu tajid ɛura:man
min mustaba:ṯin li-mustabi:ṯi: ,
20. wa ħayyatan ʔufɛuwa:na liṣbin
yaɛi:ṯu fi: muhjati-l-ɛayu:ṯi: ,

1. Compare with the preceding example, lines 10-12.

22. ...wa ṣa:rima-ʃ-ʃafratayni ɛaḍban
γayra dada:nin wa la: ʔani:ti: .
19. (In him, you will discover violence towards
he who provokes him,
20. And a deadly snake from the mountain which
destroys the soul of the wicked,
22. ...And a keen-edged blade, far-flashing, which
is neither blunt nor worn).

It is important to note that, in this poem, the amount of archaic vocabulary is particularly important at the end of every verse, in the rhyme. This is also the case in the preceding example. In fact, the compelling effect of monorhyme is often decisive of the type of words which the poet uses in this position of the verse.[1] One need only recall that every line of the poem should end with the same rhyme, that is, with words corresponding in their final sound sequence, and that the amount of such words available to the poet is sometimes extremely restricted. He must therefore avoid those consonants which are rarely used in the lexicon. With regard to the poem with which we are dealing and the preceding one, the rhyming consonant selected by the poet is the voiceless interdental fricative /t/, one of the consonants most rarely occurring in Arabic, the others being the voiced interdental fricative /d/, the

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1. This aspect of rhyme will be further examined, when dealing with metre and its different components in A.T.'s poetry [see Chap. V, section 4, pp.304-310].

emphatic voiced dental /ḍ/, the emphatic sibilant /ṣ/ and the voiceless palato-alveolar fricative /ʃ/.[1] Words ending in any one of those consonants are amongst the rare vocabulary of Arabic, and the Arab poets have generally avoided using them in the rhyme. It is significant indeed to notice that, in the four volumes of A.T.'s poetry, /ḍ/ has never been used in the rhyme; /ṣ/ has been used only in one short piece; /ṭ/ in two, /ʃ/ in five and /ḍ/ in six panegyrics and seven relatively short pieces of his other poetic genres. The significance of those figures will be the more appreciated if one knows that 72 of A.T.'s best and longest pieces have a 'b-rhyme', 63 of them an 'm-rhyme' and 58 a 'd-rhyme' [2].

The selection of a particular rhyme, therefore, depends to a great extent on the number of possible rhyme-words available to the poet, and his knowledge of vocabulary must be important enough to enable him to tackle certain rhymes which present some difficulty due to their 'unpopularity'. In fact, it is a real challenge to his skill and authority to deal with such a constraint, and many were the poets, including A.T., who derived a real pleasure from facing the problem of such 'unpopular' rhymes as /ṭ/, /ḍ/, /ʃ/, or the like. Dealing with those rhymes, and owing to the limited variety of lexical and morphological combinations into which those consonants may enter, the poet is ultimately led to resort to a rarely used, thus obscure vocabulary, which he digs out of the oldest funds

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1. See the statement of Ibn Durayd reported by as-Suyu:ṭi: "al-Muzhir", Vol. I, p. 191.

2. For further figures related to this matter, see Chap. V, sect. 4, pp. 304-310.

of Arabic. Through many generations of disuse, a good amount of this vocabulary must have become 'inelegant', and the cultural change made it sound 'odd' and 'unpolished', a fact which led many of his critics to accuse him of not selecting his words properly.

On the other hand, A.T.'s search of linguistic rarities may well be explained as an attempt, on his part, to make up for the extremely usual character of his themes and provide them with a certain poetic 'grandeur', by using some old poetic clichés like ṣa:rima-ʃ-ʃafratayn, for a 'keen-edged blade', di: maycatin, for his camel 'swift of pace', or ɛi:nu ħuqu:fin, to describe his beautiful 'large-eyed' ladies, and the like. The obscure character of many of those archaic expressions, which developed through lack of use, seems to provide them with an air of 'dignified solemnity' which stems from their association with the noble literary achievements of the past. By bringing them in, the poet succeeds in creating a certain tension in the different parts of his verse between the 'ordinary' reality with which he is dealing, and the language which he uses in speaking about it. The impact of poetic conventions in A.T.'s age was such that he was required, in front of his audience, to deal only with specific themes and handle particular 'formulae', in a concise language, straightforward and easy to understand. Hence, the great success attached to the expression which conveys its content in the best and most direct way, the one that maintains a firm relationship between poem and

reality. By using obscure language and archaic vocabulary, A.T. has not thematically diverted from this tradition, but, as J. Ben Cheikh explains it:

> "il a simplement distendu la relation du poème à l'objet; son langage n'est plus directement indicatif, les signes qu'il propose n'offrent plus au lecteur l'évidence nécessaire et surtout la cohérence faisant de la parôle l'instrument d'une pensée maîtrisée et, par là-même, rassurante." 1

Hence, the many attacks against his language so obscure that he is the only one capable of understanding it. Nevertheless, it is with such a language that he managed to break up the extreme predictability of the classical register and express his ideas, often ordinary, in a way that makes them appear new and unfamiliar. When he uses the obscure verb ʔisḥankaka in the sentence ʔisḥankaka-l-ʔamru (lit. the matter grew darker, i.e. more serious) [2], or the old-fashioned expression du: tudraʔin (i.e. a protector, a defender) [3], his verse is immediately invested with an unusual tone, with a certain 'dignity' that plays an effective part in making its 'poeticalness'. To try to 'decipher' those verses and make out the meaning of their unusual vocabulary and 'odd' combinations of sounds is to relegate the poetic content to the background because of its ordinary conventional character. This is because the formal organization of A.T.'s verse is the main

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1. J. Ben Cheikh, op.cit., p. 80.

2. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 210, l. 32; see al-Maʿarri:'s comments on the abstruse character of the verb ʔisḥankaka as well as of its rarely used structure.

3. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 351, l. 22.

guarantee of its success, and it is for this reason that one finds him concentrating on verbal acrobatics and formal adornment. Archaism in his poetry, may only be regarded as an aspect of such a tendency and a result of the extreme conventionality of the classical qaṣi:da. For a poet of A.T.'s education and thorough philological knowledge, archaism is an effective way to demonstrate his technical skill and his authority in the handling of a highly conventional material.

4. Dialectism in A.T.'s poetry

The philological knowledge of A.T. manifests itself not only in the archaic language which he uses in his poetry, but also in the introduction, from time to time, of features belonging to specific dialectal varieties of Arabic, mainly to the dialect of Ṭay?, the tribe from Southern Arabia of which he is a descendant. In fact, many features of this dialect (one of those which have been recognized by the philologists) may be encountered throughout in his work.

The most important of those features is his use of the noun du: (i.e. owner, possessor, endowed with, comprising sth.) instead of the relative pronoun ?alladi:. This particular use of du: was typical of the descendants of the South Arabian tribe of Ṭay? and was, according to al-Mubarrid, deliberately utilized by their poets (e.g. A.T., Abu: Nuwa:s, al-ħasanu-bnu Wahb al-ħa:riṯi:) in preference to the normal and more general use of relative pronouns.

In the following line, for instance [Vol. I, p. 226, l. 21]:

ʔida: ʔanta wajjahta-r-rika:ba li-qasdihi
tabayyanta taɛma-l-ma:ʔi du: ʔanta ʃa:ribuh .
(If you ride the camels and make for his [abode],
you will discover how [sweet]/the water that is
you will be drinking),

A.T. uses the Ta:ʔi: variant of the relative pronoun (i.e. du:) instead of ʔalladi: which contains a higher number of syllables and, therefore, is less appropriate in this particular metrical context. Similarly, in the following case [Vol. III, p. 76, l. 2]:

ʔana du: ɛarafti, fa-ʔin ɛaratki jaha:latun ,
fa-ʔana-l-muqi:mu qiya:mata-l-ɛudda:li:
(I am the one whom you heard of; but if you
happen to ignore it, so [know that] I am he
who breaks hell loose on [my] blamers),

the form du: ɛarafti (i.e. ... whom you heard of ...), with its lesser number of syllables than the more usual ʔalladi: ɛarafti, presents a suitable alternative for the poet to meet the requirements of metre.

Another instance of Ta:ʔi: influence on A.T.'s language is a case of phonetic assimilation which affects those irregular verbs whose third root is a semi-vowel /y/. Thus, in the dialect of Tayʔ, whenever an irregular verb in the past tense ends with the syllable /ya/ preceded by an /i/ vowel, the latter is changed by 'regressive assimilation' into an /a/, the semi-vowel /y/ is then dropped and the remaining two /a/s are combined into one long

/a:/;[1]

e.g. baqiya > baqaya > baqaa > baqa:

cv-cv-cv cv-cvv

(i.e. to stay, to remain)

ʔijtuniya > ʔijtunaya > ʔijtunaa > ʔijtuna:

cvc-cv-cv-cv cvc-cv-cvv

(i.e. to be gathered, collected)

With their different syllabic structure, the ṭa:ʔi: variants of baqiya and ʔijtuniya present an adequate alternative for the poet to 'squeeze' his language into the predetermined structure of the line. In the following verse, for instance [Vol. II, p. 304, l. 14]:

lawla:ka ɛazza liqa:ʔuhu: fi:ma:baqa:

ʔadɛa:fa ma: qad ɛazzani: fi:ma:maḍa:

(If it were not for you, [this wealth] that I am enjoying now would have been many times as much difficult [to obtain] as has been the case heretofore),

A.T. resorts to his ṭa:ʔi: variant, baqa: instead of baqiya, at the end of the first hemistich, and succeeds in this way not only in meeting the requirements of metre, but also in creating a parallel, a case of 'assonance', between baqa: (lit. what remains, what is to come) and the verb corresponding to it in the second half, maḍa: (i.e. in

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1. On this matter, see al-ʔistra:ba:di: "ʃarħu-ʃa:fiyah", Vol. III, p. 161 and p. 168; see also examples in Ibn Salla:m: "ṭabaqa:t fuħu:li-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ", p. 29.

the past, heretofore). As a result, parallelism at the end of every hemistich operates simultaneously at different levels (syllabic, metrical, phonetic, grammatical and semantic), and is further supported by the verbal repetition of fi:ma:

fi:ma: baqa: (in what is to come)

-o -o - -o[1]

fi:ma: mada: (in the past).

Similarly, in the following line, where A.T. is boasting the glory of his people [Vol. II, p. 190, l. 27]:

hal ʔawraqa-l-majdu ʔilla: fi: bani: ʔudadin
ʔawi-jtuna: minhu lawla: Tayyiʔun tamaru:
(Glory has not burst into leaves [as much as it has] amongst the sons of ʔudad, and its fruits would have never been collected if it were not for [the tribe of] Tayʔ),

the poet uses the verb -jtuna: instead of -jtuniya because the dialectal variant is more suitable for the syllabic structure of the line. One must note here that poetic licence would allow the poet to delete the last syllable of -jtuniya and lengthen the /i/ vowel preceding it (i.e. -jtuniya > -jtuni:), as is usually the case in some other dialects of Arabic [2], avoiding thereby the problem of the longer syllabic structure of -jtuniya. But A.T. seems

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1. The symbol (-) is used for a cv-syllable, while (-o) is used for cvc or cvv syllables. For more details on the scansion of Arabic verse, see Chap. V, sect. 1.

2. See al-Maʿarri:'s comments on this line, in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, p. 190.

to have preferred the form of the verb as used in his own Ṭa:ʔi: dialect apparently because this line in particular is on the praise of his people.

The influence of his dialect on the language of A.T. is also reflected by the appearance of the 'pronominal suffix' next to a verb which precedes its subject. This has been the case mainly whenever the active subject is a plural feminine [1]. Thus, in the following verse, he uses the dialectal variant ṣumna (in the context, they - fem. plur. - fasted) instead of the more generally accepted ṣa:mat [Vol. II, p. 214, l. 1]:

ʃajan fi-l-ħaʃa: tarda:duhu laysa yafturu
bihi ṣumna ʔa:ma:li: wa ʔinni: la-muftiru
(With a grief in my heart that does not subside,
my ambitions have faded although I am assiduous);

similarly, in the following line [Vol. II, p. 288, l. 4]:

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1. In C.A., and whenever the active subject is a plural and follows its verb, the element "plural" is 'Ø marked', while the marking of gender is optional, e.g. (1)a. xaraja-l-waladu (i.e. the boy went out)
b. xaraja Ø-l-ʔawla:du (i.e. the boys went out)
(2)a. xarajat-il-bintu (i.e. the girl went out)
b. xarajat Ø-il-bana:tu
or, xaraja ØØ-l-bana:tu (i.e. the girls went out). In the dialect of Ṭayʔ, however, a pronominal suffix marking the gender and number is shown, even when the active subject follows its verb. Thus, for 2b above, they say: xaraj-na-l-bana:tu, with a suffix -na marking both the gender and number. The same feature also appears in the case of verbs in the dual [see example from A.T.'s poetry discussed further, in this section]. On this matter, see Ibn Hiʃa:m: "al-Muγni:", Vol. I, pp. 404-407; Ibn Hiʃa:m notes particularly that this feature is not peculiar to the dialect of Ṭayʔ alone, but is also shared by a number of other South-Arabian dialects (e.g. the dialects of Bal-ħa:rit, ʔazd ʃunu:ʔah, etc.). See also A.T.'s poetry and comments on: line 9, Vol. I, p. 28; line 9, Vol. I, p. 301; line 16, Vol. I, p. 224; lines 33-34, Vol. I, p. 366; line 1, Vol. II, p. 214; line 4, Vol. II, p. 288; line 17, Vol. II, p. 313; line 19, Vol. III, p. 10, etc.

bika ɛa:da-n-nida:lu du:na-l-masa:ɛi:
wa-htadayna-n-niba:lu li-l-ʔaγra:di:
(Thanks to you, [people] have vied with each other for noble deeds, and the arrows have hit the targets),[1]

and in this one [Vol. III, p. 10, l. 19]:

lawla: qabu:liya nusha-l-ɛazmi murtaḥilan
la-ra:ka:da:ni: ʔilayhi-r-raḥlu wa-l-jamalu.
(If I had not consented to the advice of [my] will and set out, the saddle and the camel would have raced with me [heading] towards his [abode]);

in the latter case, the feature in question is related to a verb followed by two active subjects (namely, raḥlu and jamalu), with the mark of the dual, a long /a:/, suffixed to it (ra:kada:, as opposed to the more accepted ra:kada, i.e. they - dual - raced with ...).

In all those examples, the poet seems to have borrowed the dialectal feature as a minor form of 'licence' which enables him to fulfil the requirements of the metrical structure. This is the case, for instance in our last example, where the final vowel-lengthening marking the dual in ra:kada: corresponds to the final consonant-letter necessary for the metrical unit to be complete:[2]

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1. "the arrows have hit the targets", i.e. success has been achieved.

2. Note that in Arabic metrics, the vowel-lengthening is equivalent to a 'quiescent', 'vowelless' consonant-letter [see Chap. V, sect. 1].

la-ra:kada > la-ra:kada:

\- - o - - - - o - - o

*mu-taf-ɛi-lu > mu -taf-ɛi-lun.

This is equally the case for his use of the form wa-htadayna, in the second example: the addition of the pronominal suffix -na helps to keep up the metrical rhythm of the hemistich, by providing for a consonant-letter missing in wa-htadat:

wa-htadat-in > wa-htadayna-n

\- o - - -o - o - -o - o

*fa:-ɛi-la-tun > fa:-ɛi-la:-tun

But in the first example, the poet could have easily restricted himself to the more generally accepted form ṣa:ma (cvv-cv), instead of the dialectal variant ṣumna (cvc-cv), the two syllabic structures being metrically equivalent. Similarly, in the following line [Vol. I, p. 224, l. 16]:

fa-law ʔan-|na sayran rum-|nahu: fa-s-|taṭaɛnahu:

\- -o -o| - -o -o -o| - -o - o| - - o- -o

la- ṣa:ħab-|na na:. sawqan|ʔilay ka |maʏa:ribuh

(And if [that wasteland] could wish to move and was in a position to do so, all its parts would have accompanied us, dragging [all the way] to your [shining abode]),

the poet could have easily used ṣa:ħabana:, without the pronominal suffix -na-, and the metrical rhythm would have remained unaffected since the difference between the two forms is only of one consonant-letter:[1]

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1. i.e. It is so slight, that the metrical rhythm would not have been affected; for more details on this matter, see Chap. V, sect. 1.

la-ṣa:ħabana: sawqan ...
- -o - -o -o -o
la-ṣa:ħabnana: sawqan ...
- -o - o- -o -o -o

But he prefers the dialectal variant ṣa:ħabnana: which fits perfectly into the metrical structure and, in addition, enables him to bring in one more pronominal suffix -na- to the already existing two (rum-na-hu:, lit. they wanted it; fa-staṭaɛ-na-hu:, lit. they managed to do it), thus extending this case of alliteration to more items in the line. A.T., in fact, is well-known for this kind of subtlety in dealing with his language. Those examples illustrate perfectly the ways in which he makes use of certain dialectal features of C.A. to meet the requirements of his art, giving his poetry at the same time a certain dialectal 'coloration', and occasionally serving for further forms of patterning peculiar to artistic expression.

II. A.T. and the Creative Use of Language: The Concept of Foregrounding

1. A.T., classicism and poetic creation

We now pass from the 'conservative' to the 'liberal', from the derivative to the creative use of language in A.T.'s poetry. From the preceding sections, it has been shown how A.T. has been one of the most important pillars of classicism in the history of Arabic literature. One would wonder therefore how possible it

is to speak of 'originality' with a classical poet, particularly since poetic tradition and poetic originality seem to be contrary forces?

To answer this question properly, one must remember that, with classicism, we are in the presence of several poems which follow a certain model - the classical qaṣi:da - according to certain norms determined by the tradition. Each poem, indeed, may be considered as a variant of the model, a variant which is intended to be an improved rendering of more or less the same features characteristic of that model.

Looking into A.T.'s work itself, one will notice a certain tension, a contradiction - at least virtual - between that model and the use which the poet makes of it. Thus, one may notice for instance the existence of a vocabulary formed not only of isolated words, but also of lexical 'couples' of permanent relationship, common to a large part of his poems and which change from one genre to another. This is obviously the result of imitation, of adherence to the tradition. On the other hand, one finds him using a mixed variety of devices and a complex combination of expressive elements which mark his style with a certain singularity, with a pronounced degree of 'artifice', and show the different ways in which the original utilization of poetic conventions can manifest itself in his work.

To illustrate the preceding in its typical habitat, I shall turn to a short passage of three lines from one of A.T.'s most famous panegyrics [Vol. I, pp.222-223, l. 12-14]:

1. raɛathu-l-faya:fi: baɛdama: ka:na ħiqbatan raɛa:ha:, wa ma:ʔu-r-rawḍi yanhallu sa:kibuh ;
2. fa-ʔaḍħa-l-fala: qad jadda fi: baryi naħḍihi , wa ka:na zama:nan qabla da:ka yula:ɛibuh ;
3. fa-kam jidɛi wa:din jabba dirwata ɣa:ribin , wa bi-l-ʔamsi ka:nat ʔatmakathu maḍa:nibuh .

1. (The [flat wide] deserts have grazed [the body of that] camel after he used to graze [in their space] under the downpour of rain;
2. [it is as if] they were making every effort to carve his flesh and they used, once before, to [provide him with food];
3. Yea, many a river valley has cut the topmost crest of a [camel's] hump after its runnels have served to fatten it) [1].

From the viewpoint of Arabic poetic tradition, the preceding three lines describe an ordinary experience which may be briefly presented in 'pedestrian' language as follows: "the poet's camel is overworn by the great amount of travelling". What makes A.T.'s account 'unpedestrian', however, is partly a negative matter, for it is based on the very absence of such memorized 'chunks' as "the mount is overworn or exhausted by travel". More positively, it gives a precise vivid account of the same experience by apt choice of vocabulary: e.g. faya:fi:

1. In the tradition of C.A. poetry, the fat of the hump is the store of energy for the camel, to be spent in strenuous travel. The three lines consist of a developed variation on this particular 'motif'.

(i.e. deserts), baryu-n-naḥḍ (i.e. to carve the flesh), jabba dirwata ɣa:ribin (i.e. ... has cut the topmost crest of the camel's hump), and by a grammar which parallels the process by which the two states of the animal are described. In fact, the three lines may be grammatically divided each into two halves, the first of which is concerned with the present state of the camel, while the second one speaks of the mount as it used to be in the past. So far, the poet has clung to the classical register and his presentation of the 'motif' has not very much deviated from what is usually expected in this particular context.

But his style approaches poetic boldness in the 'animization' of faya:fi:, the deserts, which 'have grazed the camel' and 'carved his flesh' (l. 1), as well as of jidɛi wa:din which 'has cut the topmost crest of the camel's hump' after it 'has served to fatten it' (l. 3). The description of the past 'relationship' between the deserts and the camel, in line 2, as one of 'jesting'[1] quite poetically defines to the reader the past state in which the camel used to be, before going through those strenuous journeys. The verb yanhallu (i.e. to pour down), on the other hand, and its subject sa:kibuh (i.e. the downpour), in line 1, together with the verb raɛa: (i.e. to graze), seem to be good examples of ordinary usual expressions which are imbued with a great expressive power

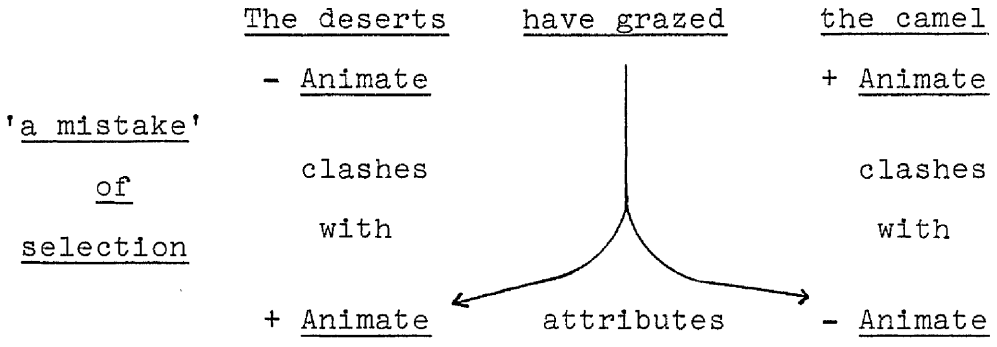
1. Literally, the second half of line 2 would be translated as follows: (... and they used, once before, to jest with him).

thanks to the appropriate context in which they are used. All these factors help to give the passage a sort of symbolical value which is very much behind the apparent strangeness and the colourful character of the picture. By the use which A.T. has made of it, the referential meaning and the affective nuances of the picture have only been partially affected. It is on the other hand, the intrinsic value of expression and the semantic relationships within the utterance which have been modified. This is an interesting example of how A.T., the classical poet, operates with his art, and it is within this sort of framework that he showed his creative manner of dealing with his language.

2. 'Deviation' and the concept of foregrounding

The discussion of the preceding example brings us to a question related to poetic language in general, and the foundation on which it is based. In analysing those lines of A.T. describing the camel, we have in fact proceeded by comparing them with ordinary 'uninspired' language. This led us to pause particularly over their formal characteristics and point out the series of animistic metaphors which provided the passage with most of its expressive power. The animistic metaphor itself is one which attributes animate characteristics to the inanimate (e.g. the deserts 'grazing the camel' and 'carving its flesh'). This type of semantic connection established

by the poet between the different 'members' of the poetic situation is itself an instance of linguistic 'oddity' because it consists of selecting an expression at variance with its context; it is based, so to speak, on a 'mistake of selection'[1] on the part of the poet. The following diagram would help to bring out the contrasting elements of meaning in "the deserts have grazed the camel":



The elements (+ animate) and (- animate) are not really part of the meaning of "have grazed": rather, one must say that they are 'attributed' by the verb "to graze" to the other neighbouring words. But this mistake of selection is deliberate from the poet; in fact it is by such a deviation from the standard norms of his language that he is capable of making poetry. As J. Mukařovský says: "the violation of the norms of the standard, its systematic violation, is what makes possible the poetic utilization of language; without this possibility, there would be no poetry" [2].

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 134.

2. J. Mukařovský: "Standard Language and Poetic Language", in P. Garvin: "A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary Structure and Style", p. 18.

Deviation, therefore, is the distinguishing mark of poetry. It has been recognized as such since at least the age of Aristotle and the Greek civilization. Much later, the Prague School aestheticians called attention to deviant expressions, to differences between the standard norms and the use made of them in poetry, and referred to them as 'foregrounded' or 'deautomized' patterns of language [1]. In more recent discussions, they are said to be 'less predictable' or 'entropic' [2]; and we, in everyday parlance, are usually signalling the same phenomenon when we say of certain expressions that they are striking, heightened, different or arresting. Whatever one chooses to characterize this feature of poetic language, it is sure that at certain points of a work of poetry, the language is used in a way that is not typical, a way that is not 'automatic' (as is the case in standard language), a way which constrains us to pause over the expression and reflect upon its form. This is the result of the choice made by the poet, the artist, amongst the various devices available to him, in order to produce the character of 'novelty' and 'originality' that we all seek when reading poetry.

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1. See: P. Garvin: op.cit., particularly B. Havranek: "The Functional Differentiation of the Standard Language", pp. 3-16, and J. Mukařovský: Ibid., pp. 17-30.

2. See: Iván Fońagy: "Communication in Poetry", in Word XVII, 1961, p. 201 and passim; see also: S.R. Levin: "Internal and External Deviation in Poetry" in Word XXI, 1965, pp. 225-237.

Deliberate 'deviation' of this sort is not of course confined to poetry, but manifests itself, for instance, in joking speech, in children's games and in other forms of everyday language as well. But here, as Mukařovský asserts, "it is always subordinate to communication: its purpose is to attract the reader's (listener's) attention more closely to the subject-matter expressed by the foregrounded means of expression" [1], whereas in poetry, the consistency and systematic character of foregrounding consist of achieving

> "maximum intensity to the extent of pushing communication into the background as the objective of expression, and of being used for its own sake; it is not used in the service of communication, but in order to place in the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself." 2

This notion of foregrounding is of great importance. It invokes the analogy of a figure seen against a background and, thereby, denotes the opposition between Standard language, the automatic system of casual and spontaneous communication, on the one hand, and poetic language, the artistic deviation which 'sticks out' from its background like a figure in the foreground of a visual field, on the other. With regard to A.T.'s poetry, the background against which the foregrounded deviations are perceived is constituted by two main components:

a) the Standard language, the background against which is reflected the aesthetically intentional distortion of the linguistic components of the work; in other words,

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1. J. Mukarovský: op.cit., p. 19.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

the intentional violation of the norms of the Standard.

b) the poetic canon, domain of the tradition to which A.T. belongs. Here, one must recall that many of the components which appear foregrounded from the standpoint of the standard language may turn out to be 'unforegrounded' from the standpoint of the poetic canon. This is because "every work of poetry is perceived against the background of a certain tradition, that is, of some automatized canon with regard to which it constitutes a distortion" [1]. Thus, the various components of the poetic register in A.T.'s work [see this Chapter, section 1] are part of the poetic canon and reflect various aspects of the stabilized literary tradition of C.A. Versification in his poetry, on the other hand, is in a way a distortion to the usual phonological arrangement of Arabic. But it is a codified distortion, a 'deviation' controlled by specific rules which constitute the domain of Arabic metrics. As such, versification may be regarded as an invariant which remains, amongst the individual variations, a unique way of deviating from the usual patterning of the standard, an instance of the 'automatization' which occurs in poetic language and which, in turn, may be the object of various 'transformations' on the part of a creative poet.

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1. Ibid., pp. 21-22.

3. Another type of foregrounding: parallelism

In the preceding section, it has been shown how deviation from the norms of the standard and the distortion of the normal process of communication are essentially what makes possible the poetic utilization of language. But the poet's attitude towards his language is not necessarily 'negative'; in other words, it does not always consist of breaking the normal pattern of the language. In addition, the secret of his craftsmanship may also be shown in a kind of 'extra-competence' which he enjoys amongst the other members of his community and which allows him not only to use language in conformity with the common trend, but also to introduce some 'extra-regularities' into the language. This is 'parallelism' in the widest sense of the word. Regularity in language is reflected, for instance, in the fact that anyone who uses it must obey rules and follow certain norms, or in the fact that a text may be segmented into equivalent units (e.g. syllables in phonology, clauses in grammar, etc.). Metre, on the other hand, alliteration and the patterning of syntactically equivalent structures are different types of 'extra-regularity' added to the regularity already inherent in the language.

To illustrate the foregoing discussion in more details, let us analyse the following lines by A.T. which exhibit a case of syntactic parallelism (i.e. the succession of sentences of similar syntactic structure) [Vol. I, p. 134, l. 19-20]:

1. fa-ka?anna qussan fi: ɛuka:ḍin yaxṭubu ,
   wa ka?anna layla-l-?axyaliyyata tandubu ,
2. wa kaṯi:ra ɛazzata yawma baynin yansubu ,
   wa-bna-l-muqaffaɛi fi-l-yati:mati yushibu .

1. ([Your speech is] like the speeches of Quss at ɛuka:ḍ, like the wailing [elegies] of Layla-l-?axyaliyyah [on her lost love],
2. [Like] the love poems of Kaṯi:r-ɛazzah on the day of parting, and the elaborate [prose] of Ibnu-l-Muqaffaɛ in [his] Yati:ma) [1].

The present two lines are made up of four coordinated nominal sentences, each of which is occupying one hemistich. Every sentence has the primary structure (NP + VP) and is governed by the conjunction ka?anna (lit. as if, as though) which is dropped in line two because it is understood from the context. NP is a proper name in the four sentences, while VP is an intransitive verb in the imperfect.

To the conjunction of coordination fa, which introduces the series of parallel 'members' in line 1, we have the other conjunction wa which ensures a simple link between the remaining three sentences.

The differences in structure between the four

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1. It is a common practice in C.A. poetry that the poet praises the patron for his fluency and eloquence. Here, A.T. is comparing the patron's speech with that of famous Arab poets and literary men. Quss is a renowned preacher of the pre-Islamic period, who used to give his speeches in front of the crowds attending the big su:q of ɛuka:ḍ; Kaṯi:r ɛazzah and Layla-l-?axyaliyyah (the latter is a woman-poet) are famous for their highly touching love poems, while Ibnu-l-Muqaffaɛ is the famous prose writer of the early Abbasid period.

sentences appear in the position between NP and VP. Thus, in the first sentence and the fourth, we have a prepositional phrase (respectively, fi: ɛuka:ḏin and fi-l-yati:mati); in the second sentence, we have an adjective denoting the descent of the proper name immediately preceding it (i.e. Layla-l-ʔaxyaliyyata), while in the third, we have an adverbial phrase (yawma baynin).

On the phonological level, one notes that the four VPs have the same syllabic structure: one long syllable (CVC), followed by two short (CV-CV):

yax-ṭu-bu	
tan-du-bu	
yan-su-bu	Phonemic structure
yus-hi-bu	
CVC-CV-CV	Syllabic structure

On the other hand, the four verbs rhyme with each other, creating thereby a regular pattern of median rhymes, a device known in Arabic rhetoric as taṣri:ɛ.

The succession in the four hemistichs of four sentences of the same primary structure, the selection of four verbs having an identical syllabic structure, with the same rhyme-ending and in syntactically parallel positions, all this, in those lines by A.T., is a pattern superimposed, so to speak, on the patterning already inherent in the language and in the metrical regularity of the lines.

The type of parallelism illustrated here is mainly a syntactic one. However, A.T. is well-known for using this device in a more complex manner, to oppose different elements in his verse on various linguistic levels. Thus,

as will be discussed later [see Chapters III, IV and V], parallelism in his poetry may occur on the syntactic, semantic, or phonological levels; it may also occur simultaneously on different levels of structure.

In its broad sense, parallelism is precisely the opposite of the kind of foregrounding encountered in constructions like ʔanfu-ṣ-ṣiba: (lit. the 'nose' of youth, i.e. its beginning) [1], or raʕathu-l-faya:fi: (i.e. the deserts have grazed the body of the camel), which are based on a 'mistake of selection' on the part of the poet, as mentioned earlier. With parallelism, on the contrary, "where the language allows him a choice, he consistently limits himself to the same option" [2]. However, it should be remembered that parallelism is not a matter of mere regularity or repetition of identical elements in identical positions of the poetic structure. The succession, in the preceding example, of nominal sentences of similar syntactic structure is in any case so frequent in C.A. that one tends not to notice it, and would hardly consider it contrived for artistic effects. In contrast, it is the fact that such a degree of syntactic patterning has been consistently followed in four consecutive hemistichs and has been accompanied by another one, on the phonological level, which gives it more power and adds to its expressive effect. On the other hand, if one alters the parallel

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1. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, p. 250, l. 26.

2. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 64.

members in such a way that this second condition (i.e. the phonological correspondence) no longer applies (e.g. by having yuña:ḍiru instead of yaxṭubu, tabki: instead of tandubu, yataγazzalu instead of yansubu, etc.), metre will not be the only element to suffer damage, but the whole pattern also will be considerably weaker, because there will no longer be such a close phonological correspondence to strengthen the relationship already existing between its different components.

4. Foregrounding and interpretation

A convincing illustration of the power of foregrounding to suggest latent significance is furnished by these lines from A.T.'s famous poem on the conquest of Ammorium [Vol. I, pp. 41-45, l. 3-9]:

1. wa-l-εilmu fi: ʃuhubi-l-ʔarma:ħi la:miεatan bayna-l-xami:sayni, la: fi-s-sabεati-ʃ-ʃuhubi: ;
2. ʔayna-r-riwa:yatu ʔam ʔayna-n-nuju:mu wa ma: sa:γu:hu min zuxrufin fi:ha: wa min kadibi: ?
3. taxarrusan wa ʔaña:di:tan mulaffaqatan , laysat bi-nabεin ʔida: εuddat wa la: γarabi: ;
4. εaja:ʔiban, zaεamu-l-ʔayya:ma mujfilatan εanhunna fi: safari-l-ʔaṣfa:ri ʔaw rajabi: ,
5. wa xawwafu-n-na:sa min dahya:ʔa muḍlimatin ʔida: bada-l-kawkabu-l-γarbiyyu ḍu-ḍ-ḍanabi: ,
6. wa sayyaru-l-ʔabruja-l-εulya: murattibatan ma: ka:na munqaliban ʔaw γayra munqalibi: ;
7. yaqdu:na bi-l-ʔamri εanha: wa-hya γa:filatun ma: da:ra fi: falakin minha: wa fi: quṭubi: .

1. (And knowledge [resides] in the flames of the lances flashing between the two massed armies, not in the seven luminaries;
2. Where [now] is the recital [of the astrologers], indeed where are the stars, and the embroidery and the lie they fashioned concerning them?
3. [Mere] forgery and concocted stories, not to be reckoned either [firm-rooted] mountain-tree, or [even river-fringing] willow;
4. Marvels, they alleged the days would reveal in [portentous] Ṣafar or Rajab,
5. And they terrified the people [foreboding] a dark calamity, when the tailed western star appeared;
6. And they catalogued the upper constellations as between moving and unmoving;
7. Determining the matter according to them, whereas they [i.e. the signs] are heedless which of them revolves in a 'sphere' and which on a 'pole') [1].

In those lines, A.T. makes a skilful use of the stylistic device by which various pieces of specialized astrological language (underlined in the text, above) are transposed into a poetic context. The poet is addressing the Byzantine astrologers who predicted the time inauspicious for the conquest. His tone is defying and the apt selection of his words from the specialized catalogue of astrology

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1. The translation is by A.J. Arberry: "Arabic Poetry: a Primer for Students", pp. 50-52.

has provided the passage with a style that very much recalls the argumentative prose of the philological and legal schools of the IXth century A.D. This has been the case in many of his poems. Thus, one finds him using the language of philosophers and religious sects [1], the language of the grammarians [2], or borrowing expressions from Koranic verses and theological circles [3].

The fact that those passages of particularly 'specialized' language occur in poetry, side by side with other more typically 'poetic' usages of C.A., causes us to pay them the 'compliment of unusual scrutiny', to use the expression of G.N. Leech, and ask what the point of their inclusion at this or that place in the poem is. In this way, one is led to look into the relevance of this 'register-mixing' to the general context of the poem, into its artistic significance in the light of what has been understood from the rest of the poem. G.N. Leech makes an interesting parallel between this method of composing and the painter's technique of 'collage'; he says:

> "This method of composition recalls the painter's technique of 'collage'; in particular, the gumming of bits of newspaper, advertisements, etc., on the surface of a painting. Because a piece of newspaper, whatever its content, appears in the unwonted setting of a painting, we look at it with more attention, and with a different kind

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1. e.g. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 30, l. 30.

2. e.g. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 29, l. 13.

3. See Ibid., poem No. 72, Vol. II, pp. 198-209 (61 lines), where nearly every line is an instance of this feature.

> of attention from that of the careless eye we would cast upon it in a customary situation." 1

The same applies to A.T.'s literary 'collage' and it is in this way that one reaches the interpretation stage of any foregrounded feature in poetic language. In fact, parallelism and deviation are not poetical by themselves, but only if they are themselves founded on a specific regularity, and cease to be arbitrary disruptions of the normal 'automatic' process of linguistic communication. A foregrounded deviation, for instance, is based on a deliberate transgression of the standard norms of the language. It leaves a gap in one's comprehension of the poetic text. This gap can be filled and the deviation rendered significant if, by an effort of his imagination, the reader provides some deeper connection which compensates for the superficial oddity: this is what G.N. Leech meant when he said that "poetic foregrounding presupposes some motivation on the part of the writer and some explanation on the part of the reader" [2]. Thus, the superficial oddity which accompanies the use of a metaphor may be explained in the form of analogy, by giving a figurative interpretation to the various terms of that metaphor. Other forms of deviation and parallelism can be given different sorts of interpretation, as will be shown in the forthcoming chapters, and this by trying to apprehend a linguistic connection

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 58.

2. Ibid., p. 58.

between the feature itself and the other more well-established items of the norm, and also by trying to find out its contribution to the total effectiveness of the poem where it occurs.

Conclusion

From the preceding section, it will be understood that the concept of foregrounding, with its two varieties (namely, parallelism and deviation), will be the basic concept to be followed henceforth in the assessment of A.T.'s creative use of language. It is however necessary, for the sake of methodological approach, to draw some additional distinctions of major importance.

Foregrounding, as a chief poetic device, occurs at various linguistic levels. However, in A.T.'s poetry, its two types seem to have complementary spheres of importance. Thus, while parallelism is on the whole a feature of grammar and phonology in his language, linguistic deviation seems to be of primary importance mostly when located in the areas of deep structure and semantics. This contrast between surface and deep structures, between 'expression' and 'content', has been made in order to introduce another one, established by G.N. Leech, between:

a) 'schemes', which he associates with foregrounded repetitions of expression [1];

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1. The reasons for defining 'schemes' as 'repetitions' rather than 'regularities' will become clear later on, when dealing with 'syntactic parallelism' in A.T.'s poetry.

and b) 'tropes', which he associates with foregrounded irregularities of content[1].

This opposition between 'schemes' and 'tropes' will be henceforth adopted. The categories so defined will in fact serve to account for many of the most important aesthetic effects of A.T.'s language. They do not cover, for instance, the features of 'archaism' or 'dialectism' as they appear in his poetry, but they certainly cover in all essentials the rhetorical categories of which A.T.'s style is so much typical, those categories which have suffered very much from the traditional classifications of the Arab rhetoricians.

A final point needs to be made. Both 'schemes' and 'tropes' occur at various linguistic levels. Thus, a scheme may be identified as a grammatical, lexical or phonological pattern; likewise, a trope can be described as a grammatical, a lexical or a semantic deviation. This is to show that there is a close interdependence between those different levels, and one cannot always handle each one of them independently from the others: the differentiation between 'expression' and 'content' is not as obvious as it may seem.

Those distinctions being made, the assessment of A.T.'s style will be made according to the following headings:

- grammatical parallelism [Chapter III],
- phonological parallelism [Chapter IV],

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1. G.N. Leech, op.cit., p. 74.

- metre, as an instance of foregrounded parallelism [Chapter V],
- 'figurative language', as based on foregrounded deviations of content [Chapter VI].

CHAPTER III

GRAMMATICAL PARALLELISM IN A.T.'s POETRY

This is the type of parallelism which occurs on the formal level of language, that is, in the grammar and lexicon of the poetic structure. In A.T.'s poetry, this feature will be analysed under two separate headings:

1. Syntactic parallelism: based upon the succession of two or more parallel sentences, clauses or phrases with an equal syntactic value, whether the term "parallel" refers to two full sentences (or more) balanced against each other, or two phrases which serve the same function in the sentence of which they are a part.

2. Semantic parallelism: or parallelism of members with a semantic relationship, that is, a relationship between the meaning or ideas embodied in two or more sentences, phrases or words. By means of such a relationship, the elements involved are brought into balance with each other. In A.T.'s poetry, this feature juxtaposes elements with mainly a relationship of synonymy and, more typical of his style, of opposition or antithesis.

Parallelism, with its two types, may be confined to one verse, but may also extend over a group of verses creating thereby a great deal of structural unity between them. Henceforth, the elements involved in any type of parallelism will be called "parallel members".

In what follows, I shall be considering each type of parallelism as it occurs in A.T.'s poetry, illustrating the various forms in which it may appear, and

trying to show the special poetic effects that it may produce.

But first of all, let me give a brief survey of some basic rules of Arabic prosody peculiar to the structure of verse, for it would show us the existence, on the metrical level, of a specific regular pattern which is repeatedly encountered throughout a given poem, and which has a strong counterpart in the verse's syntactic and thematic organization.

I. The Structure of the Single Verse in C.A. Poetry[1]

If one attempts to define a single verse of Arabic poetry as reflected by the practice of Arab poets and confirmed by Arabic poetic theory, the narrowest definition he can get is that it is "a meaningful group of words whose syllables vary in length and number according to certain patterns known as metres (ʔabħur)".[2] In the prosodic system of Arabic, one may detect two features particularly important for an understanding of the structure of the individual verse.

The first feature is that, within a single poem, the metre and rhyme of the first verse must be repeated in the succeeding verses. This has the effect of predetermining

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1. This question will be studied in more detail in chap. V when dealing with "metre" in A.T.'s poetry. Dealing with it at this stage is only in order to explain its strong relationship with the aspects of parallelism which we are concerned with now.

2. R.P. Scheindlin: "Form and Structure in the Poetry of Al-Muʿtamid Ibn ʿabbaːd", p. 31.

within narrowly defined limits the length and number of syllables of which each verse is composed so that, throughout a given poem, a series of verses rhythmically 'echo' or repeat the pattern already introduced by the first verse. Thus, R.P. Scheindlin notes:

> "built in the metrical laws of Arabic poetry, and into the intuition of every medieval Arab auditor, is a sensation of rhythmic anticipation. The past experience of the auditor has trained him to measure the length and internal rhythm of the first verse and, upon the conclusion of that verse, to expect a twin verse which, upon reaching the anticipated length, will bring the cycle to a close, thus resolving the feeling of anticipation. The second verse in turn sets into motion a new cycle, which will be repeated again and again until the poem is finished."[1]

Rhythmically therefore, a poem of C.A. may be regarded as a succession of renewed cycles based upon this pattern of anticipation - resolution suggested above. This pattern is in turn complemented and reinforced by the unvarying rhyme:

> "the effect of monorhyme is that the anticipated rhyme-syllable punctuates the rhythmic unwinding of the verse to its anticipated length, adding finality to the sensation of resolution which results from the regularity of metre." [2]

The second peculiarity of Arabic prosody, which is

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1. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

2. Ibid., p. 32. For more details on the importance of the rhyme-word in resolving the feeling of anticipation aroused by the beginning of the verse, see Quda:ma Ibn Jaɛfar: "Naqd al-ʃiɛr", and his study of the figure called tawʃi:ħ under the heading: "ʔiʔtila:fu-l-qa:fiyah maɛa ma: yadullu ɛalayhi sa:ʔiru-l-bayt, pp. 96-97 of the Arabic text; see also: Ibn Raʃi:q: al-ɛumdah, Vol. I, pp. 151-177; see also Chap. V, section 4, pp. 297-304.

also important in defining the structure of the verse, has to do with the arrangement and number of metrical units[1] of which the various metres are composed. Thus, each verse is composed of two halves, or hemistichs, rhythmically balanced against each other, by means of a similar number of units that they both share. In other words, they are of approximately equal length; approximately, because in practice, the narrowly fixed rules of metrics showed that it is very often not possible for the poet to create an absolutely equal rhythm in his verses throughout a given poem. Various types of variations between the length of the hemistichs were therefore permitted.[2]

But despite these permitted variations between the first and second hemistichs, it is practically shown that the degree of change is so slight and so rigidly

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1. By "metrical units" we mean the eight 'mnemonic words' in which the constituent syllables of the metres are arranged. Every metre is a component of one, two or three of these units, repeated symmetrically in each hemistich (e.g. the unit faɛu:lun : cv+cvv+cvc). For more details, see Chap. V, sect. 1.

2. Thus, the Ṭawi:l metre (lit. the "long metre") is ideally represented by the following units:

   [Faɛu:lun - mafa:ɛi:lun - faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun] x 2
   cv-cvv-cvc - cv-cvv-cvv-cvc-cv-cvv-cvc-cv-cvv-cvv-cvc

   But it may exhibit the following variations within a poetic context:
   (a) faɛu:lun may become faɛu:lu, i.e. its last cvc becomes a short cv.
   (b) mafa:ɛi:lun (the second of each hemistich only) may become either mafa:ɛilun (i.e. its penultimate cvv is shortened to become a cv) or mafa:ɛi: (i.e. the last cvc is dropped from the unit).

   More details on these variations will be given later on with regard to the other metres. See Chap. V, sect. 1.

prescribed by the rules of prosody that there can be no question of the listener being taken by surprise. Thus, Scheindlin concludes:

> "just as the relationship between the verses is fixed in such a way that each verse produces an anticipation of another like it, so the relationship of the hemistichs is fixed in such a way that each hemistich demands a twin corresponding to it exactly, only minor and predictable variations being permitted. The individual verse too embodies the anticipation - resolution pattern which we posit as being characteristic of the poetic experience of the Arabs." 1

Graphically, this bipartite division of the Arabic single verse into two equal halves is reflected, as Trabulsi noted,[2] by the traditional blank space left between the two hemistichs, even when they divide in the middle of a word.

Consequently, one may conclude by saying that a poem of C.A. is a succession of rhythmically parallel cycles based upon two types of anticipation - resolution patterns: one which occurs between whole verses, and another which occurs between the two hemistichs of the individual verse (or bayt).

This pattern which is produced by the metrical structure seems to have its counterpart in the verse's grammatical organization. Indeed, a careful examination of A.T.'s poetry would show that, in a surprisingly large number of verses, and despite the rigidity of Arabic

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1. R.P.Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 35.

2. A. Trabulsi: "La Critique Poétique des Arabes", p. 173, f.n. 2, also quoted in R.P. Scheindlin, op.cit., p. 35.

prosodic rules which may seem to leave no room for further regularity of construction, "there is a common feature which was not taken into account by the medieval critics. These verses are composed of two syntactic units which seem to balance each other, either in length, or in meaning, or in both".[1] Let us examine a selection of verses from A.T.'s work to gather evidence for the statement just advanced.

A very large amount of A.T.'s poetry shows the presence, in one verse, of two sentences absolutely independent from each other with regard to their syntax. For example [Vol. I, p. 242, l. 10]:

ka:nat lana: malɛaban nalhu: bi-zuxrufihi:/
wa qad yunaffisu ɛan jiddi-l-fata-l-laɛibu:
(To us, she was a pleasure of which we used to enjoy the splendour / pleasure may [often] relieve the earnest hero of his worries).

The line, as we can see, is composed of two separate sentences, extending each in one hemistich. They are independent from each other, and any one of them can syntactically stand alone. Similarly, in this line [Vol. I, p. 245, l. 21]:

rid?u-l-xila:fati fi-l-julla: ?ida: nazalat/
wa qayyimu-l-mulki la-l-wa:ni: wa la-n-naṣibu:
([He is] the caliph's help in disaster when it occurs / and the caretaker of the monarchy, who neither flags, nor gets weary).

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1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 36.

Two sentences, independent from each other, occur in each half. The end of the first sentence falls at the hemistich break emphasizing thereby the independence of each half, and making more obvious the feeling of balance between them.

This feeling is even more pronounced in A.T.'s verses where two sentences of high syntactic equivalence occupy each hemistich of the verse. This is syntactic parallelism, and it occurs in a considerably high amount of A.T.'s poetry. In the following example, parallelism occurs in each line between two sentences either of which is grammatically capable of standing alone [Vol. II, pp. 96-97, l. 5-6]:

1. fa ha:da: yastahillu ɛala: ɣali:li:/
   wa ha:da: yastahillu ɛala: tila:di:/
2. wa yasqi: da: mada:niba kulli ɛirqin/
   wa yutriɛu da: qara:rata kulli wa:di:/[1]

(1. This one flows over my [burning] thirst /
and that one flows over my [old] possessions;
2. This one irrigates the runnels of every nerve /
and that one fills the depth of everywhere.)

As shown in the translation, the repetitive pattern in these two lines is well established; in each one, the first hemistich 'anticipates' a pattern which is quickly 'resolved' in the second by a syntactically equivalent

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1. The poet here is addressing a high-ranking man in the Abbasid society. He is asking him for some wine and money, and describing the effect which they will have on him: the former will help him to fight off his thirst, while the latter will flow over his possessions like an enriching rain.

sentence. Similarly, the preceding example shows that this aspect of parallelism does not occur between the two hemistichs of a verse only, but may frequently occur also between two or more consecutive lines.

From a 'thematic' point of view (i.e. in relation to the subject matter of the verse), when reading A.T.'s poetry, one notes that a single verse is usually made up of two members, not necessarily parallel in their syntax, but very often so, of which "the first member states the subject matter of the verse as a whole, while the second member comments on it, modifies it, contrasts it with something else, or draws the auditor's attention to some aspect of the opening statement which is of special interest or importance."[1]. As in the following line, for instance [Vol. I, p. 421, l. 46]:

hiya ǰawharun naṯrun / fa-ʔin ʔallaftahu:
bi-ʃ-ʃiɛri ṣa:ra qala:ʔidan wa ɛuqu:da:

(Their virtues are [like] scattered jewels
of which / my poetry makes [costly]
necklaces),

the poet makes a statement, in the beginning of the line, about the virtues of his patrons (which he compares to costly, scattered jewels, to denote their uniqueness). Then, he follows it by another statement about his poetry and its role in making these virtues known, thus modifying the first statement. Similarly, in this line, where the

1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 60.

poet describes the effect of wine [Vol. I, p. 30, l. 14]:

wa daʕi:fatun fa-ʔida: ʔasa:bat fursatan
qatalat / kaḍa:lika qudratu-d-duʕafa:ʔi:

([Wine is] weak, but when it has a chance it kills / likewise is the strength of the weak.),

a first statement is made about wine and its strength; then a second one comes to comment on it, thus bringing the pattern to resolution.

The present pattern is even more important in the following example [Vol. II, p. 158, l. 22-23]:

1. ʔiḍa: ma: ʃiʕru qawmin ka:na laylan /
taballajata: kama-nʃaqqa-n-naha:ru: /
2. wa ʔin ka:nat qaṣa:ʔiduhum juḍu:ban /
talawwanata: kama-zdawaja-l-baha:ru: / .

1. (When people's verse is [as dark as] night/ my two poems dazzle like daylight;
2. and when their poems are barren / mine become as colourful as a [blossoming] flower.)

The poet here makes a comparison between his own poems and those of other people. The two members of the balance each occupy one hemistich. The first one anticipates the theme of the line, and the second resolves it by making the opposition required. As the translation shows, the two halves of each line are not syntactically equivalent; rather, the first half is made up of a clause subordinate to the main clause which occurs in the second one.

The poet, however, has succeeded first in arousing our interest and curiosity through the beginning of the verse, then satisfying that curiosity by making the second member sufficiently important to balance against it (through a semantic opposition between layl / naha:r, i.e. night/day judu:ban/baha:ru, i.e. barren/a blossoming flower). A distinction of the various elements which A.T. may employ in constructing his verse in this way will be given later in the chapter [see sect. 3].

In the preceding few pages, I have discussed and illustrated R.P. Scheindlin's hypothesis on the existence of an 'anticipation - resolution' pattern in C.A. poetry, a feature which, I believe, is quite pronounced in A.T.'s verse. This pattern has its roots in the metrical structure of Arabic, but also has a strong counterpart in the verse's syntactic and thematic organization, as will be further explained.

It should be noted here that not all A.T.'s verses exhibit this bipartite division in their structure (whether syntactic or thematic); on the contrary, a large amount of his poetry is made up of verses of a 'monopartite' or a 'tripartite' type, that is, they are composed of a single syntactic unit, or of three syntactic units separated by two major pauses. Further divisions of the verse into smaller units occur only rarely in his poetry.[1]

As in the bipartite type of verses, syntactic

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1. See for instance, A.T.'s poetry, Vol. II, p. 292, l. 20; Vol. IV, p. 44, l. 8, p. 45, l. 16, etc.

and semantic parallelism may also play an important role in many tripartite verses. In the following example [Vol. II, p. 65, l. 15]:

lahu xuluqun sahlun / wa nafsun tiba:ɛuha:
laya:nun / wa la:kin ɛirduhu: min safan saldi:

(He has a complaisant temper / and a mild-mannered nature / but his honour [is made] of hard rock)[1],

we have a tripartite verse in which three nominal sentences of equal or near equal syntactic weight occur. The second of them (i.e. nafsun tiba:ɛuha: laya:nun) straddles the hemistich break (which is very often the case in tripartite verses), completely destroying the balancing effect of this break, and suspending the regular rise and fall which constitutes the natural rhythm of Arabic poetry. By means of this feature, such tripartite verses are endowed with a different effect from the one noticed earlier in bipartite verses. This feeling is even more pronounced in the following line [Vol. II, p. 407, l. 4]:

yaɣli: ʔida: lam yadtarim / wa yuri: ʔida:
lam yaħtadim / wa yuɣissu ʔin lam yuʃriqi: /

(When not ablaze [the poet's desire for his love] boils / when it does not burn, it illuminates [him] / and chokes when it does not smother).[2]

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1. i.e. He is an unwavering man in matters that touch his honour and dignity.

2. This is one of A.T.'s most intricate verses, where the commentary gives little help. It seems that the poet is trying to say that love, to be true and authentic, is the one which has such effects on the lover as stated in the line, yet without causing his ruin.

Here, the tripartite division of the line is matched with a perfect case of syntactic parallelism between three verbal sentences sharing the following primary structure:

[V.P. + Adverbial Temporal Clause].

a) V.P. V (imperfect) + Actor (Ø suffix, 3rd pers. pron. masc. sing.) [yaɣli: , yuri: , yuɣissu]

b) Adv. Temp. Cl. conjunction (ʔiḍa:) + V.P. = negative functional (lam) + V (imperfect, jussive[1]) + Actor (Ø suffix, 3rd pers. masc. sing.) [yaḍṭarim, yaħtadim, yuʃriq].

Syntactic parallelism, in this line, occurs between three sentences of which the second one straddles the hemistich break; this leads to a complete destruction of the usual metrical division of the verse, and introduces a new tripartite rhythmical division. Thematically, the line is formed of three synonymous statements [see this chap., sect. 3].

Monopartite verses in A.T.'s poetry, on the other hand, are those verses which lack any strong syntactic break and therefore, do not display the characteristic balancing of hemistichs typical of the bipartite verses. In the following line, for instance [Vol. II, p. 206, l. 38]:

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1. The Jussive of the Imperfect (or muda:riɛ majzu:m): e.g. lam yafɛal (i.e. he did not do): The jussive of the imperfect, introduced by the negative functional (lam), is basically equivalent to the negation of its perfect counterpart, faɛala (i.e. he did). For further details see: W. Wright: "A Grammar of the Arabic Language", Vol. II, pp. 22-23,

dallat zaxa:rifuhu-l-xali:fata ʔannahu:
ma: kullu ɛu:din na:ḍirin bi-nuḍa:ri:

(His [deceptive] flowers of speech proved to the caliph that a green sappy twig is not [necessarily] of nuḍa:r[1] wood),

although the verb introducing the verse governs two objects of which the second one (a full sentence) occupies the whole of the second half, the syntactic break between the main clause (containing the first verb: dallat, i.e. proved) and the subordinate clause (functioning as a direct object) is not strong enough to allow us to consider the line as formed of two separate syntactic units.

The function of those 'monopartite' and 'tripartite' verses, when they occur in A.T.'s poetry, seems to provide "variation in what appears to non-Arab readers as an unbroken, monotonous series of uniform verses",[2] as R.P. Scheindlin suggests. This would also apply to verses with further divisions.

II. Syntactic Parallelism in A.T.'s Poetry

1. Parallelism as a device of foregrounding

As already shown in a previous chapter [see chap. II, p.92-101], foregrounding, as a major device typical of

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1. nuḍa:r (and niḍa:r) is a tree from the wood of which bowls, drinking-cups and pails for milking are made. It has been often mentioned in C.A. poetry, and the high appreciation the Arabs have of its quality is quite clear from the verse quoted here.

2. R.P. Scheindlin, op.cit., p. 59.

poetic language, can be manifested in two ways, i.e. deviation and parallelism.

While deviation consists of a deliberate violation of the standard linguistic norms, as an irregularity contrived for aesthetic purposes, parallelism, on the other hand, consists of the introduction of extra-regularities within the poetic text. In other words, parallelism is a form of repetition of various linguistic features (e.g. grammatical, lexical, semantic, phonological) contrived for certain aesthetic and communicative reasons. These repetitive patterns were termed "schemes" earlier, and as such were defined as foregrounded repetitions of expression; 'repetitions' and not 'regularities' because, while language allows for a great deal of lexical and grammatical repetitions, many of which are pushed to the foreground of a poetic text, a large amount of these repetitions do not take place within the framework of parallelism. On the contrary, they are rather irregular types of repetition or 'free repetitive patterns' which, despite their lack of regularity, strike the listener as having deliberate rhetorical effects. The definition of schemes introduced above is wide enough to include both parallelism and these types of repetition.

With regard to A.T.'s poetry, free repetitive patterns occur only rarely and are of no importance compared with the many patterns in which a strong syntactic relationship largely contributes to the poetic heightening of his verse. It is with these types of repetition that we shall be concerned in this section of this chapter.

2. Syntactic parallelism and pure verbal repetition

Parallelism as defined above is a process to be differentiated from pure verbal repetition such as the one we find in this general mourning lament of Arabic:

ʔalahfi: ɛalayk ! ʔalahfi: ɛalayk !

(I cry woe upon you! I cry woe upon you!)

This is because a mechanical reiteration of the same words in the same place is not to be counted as a case of parallelism. Parallelism requires an element of identity and of contrast.

Thus, with the two following parallel sequences:

a) [X + Y + Z],

b) [X + W + Z],

one would say that Y and W are the variable elements of the pattern which are equivalent only with respect to their similar syntagmatic position in relation to the identical elements X and Z of the two parallel sequences. In other words, X and Z are identical paradigmatic choices occupying equivalent syntagmatic positions; whereas Y and W are variable choices equivalent in terms of their chain (syntagmatic) relationships with the other identical elements of the parallel sequences.[1] Obviously, these conditions are not present in automatic repetitive sequences like the mourning lament of Arabic mentioned above, where

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1. For more details, see W.I. Saif: "A Linguistic Study of the Language of Modern Arabic Poetry", Chap. IV, p. 140.

there are no contrasting elements to be considered as parallel with respect to their position in the pattern.

3. Degrees of syntactic parallelism

As an instance of foregrounding, parallelism is not an absolute feature, but rather a matter of degree, which must be measured according to various formal factors, and against the linguistic background of the poetic text. This is applicable to all devices of parallelism (i.e. syntactic, lexical, phonological, etc.) that may occur within or outside A.T.'s poetry.

An important factor in determining the outstanding character of a case of parallelism is the degree of its frequency in general usage; thus, the more frequent a pattern is in common usage, the less we tend to notice its recurrence in the poet's language as a deliberate instance of foregrounded parallelism. In the following line, from one of A.T.'s panegyrics [Vol. III, p. 125, l. 40]:

> ʔara-bna ʔabi: Marwa:na ʔamma: ɛaṭa:ʔuhu: fa-ṭa:min, waʔamma: ħukmuhu: fa-hwa ɛa:dilu:
> (Ibn Abi Marwan's generosity is [certainly] flowing and his verdicts just),[1]

1. There seems to be something unusual in the syntactic structure of this verse, and the translation is not syntactically in accordance with the text. Literally, it should be rendered as follows: (I see Ibn Abi Marwan: as for his generosity [it is] flowing, and as for his verdict [it is] just). The structure of the two parallel adjectival noun clauses (underlined in the text) itself is not unusual, as much as their position following the direct object (the proper name).

we have (in the sequence underlined) a case of syntactic parallelism between two adjectival noun clauses qualifying the proper name occurring as a direct object of the verb which begins the line (ʔara:, i.e. I see). The two adjectival noun clauses are of the following structure:

[ʔamma: + N.P. Subject + fa + Predicate].

However, the occurrence of such a sequence in ordinary Arabic is so common that one can say that it is not used here in order to convey any particular aesthetic effect. In other words, such a sequence can hardly be considered as the result of a deliberate choice, on the part of the poet, as an instance of foregrounded parallelism. Moreover, one can say that once the poet has made his choice of the structure (ʔamma: ... fa, i.e. as for ... it is) to introduce the first adjectival nominal clause, in structural terms, he has no other option but to follow it with its parallel counterpart, in the second. This is imposed on the poet by the very norms of his language which have established the form of structure (ʔamma: ... fa) as one which introduces parallel constructions and cannot occur outside this pattern. Parallelism, in this line, cannot be considered as a deliberate instance of foregrounding therefore, because the language does not offer any other option to the poet. As W.I.Saif remarks, the significant case of foregrounded parallelism operating for stylistic and aesthetic effects

> "means a voluntary restriction of syntactic choices, where the general grammatical system provides many possibilities; whereas a restriction imposed by the language itself

> cancels out in a sense, this calculated restriction on the part of the user." 1

On the other hand, parallelism, as any other kind of linguistic foregrounding, achieves its maximum intensity and most efficiently conveys the effect required by its consistency and systematic character. It is the insistence on repeating the same pattern where there is more than one option for change that makes the feature of parallelism - whatever its form - a stylistically significant feature contrived for some aesthetic purpose.

This fact brings us closer to another associative factor regarding layers of syntactic structure and its relationship with syntactic parallelism. Thus, units in grammar are organized into different layers of construction moving from the most primary and general to the most particular. In any language, there is a certain number of basic patterns of sentence structures which constitute the model on which innumerable longer sentences can be built up by series of expansions at various structural places. To account for those exponents, grammatical description entails a 'scale of delicacy' proceeding from the primary sentence types to the formally most delicate details until we reach the actual lexical choices involved in the structure, or vice versa. Illustrating this, it suffices our present purpose to consider the primary structure of the Arabic nominal group: (M) N (Q): a noun which may or may not be preceded by a modifier and followed by a qualifier.

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1. W.I. Saif: op.cit., p. 142.

The element (M) can be broken into a range of formal elements one may call 'Deictics'. Deictics in turn include a range of formal exponents such as the definite article (al-), the demonstratives (e.g. ha:da:, this, ha:ʔula:ʔi, those, these, etc.), and the numeratives. Likewise, the element (Q) includes a number of secondary exponents which are also subject to classification and sub-classification, and in most of these, the exponents form open sets for the treatment of which grammar hands over to the lexicon.[1]

Accordingly, grammatical sequences may correspond to one another with respect to their primary (i.e. general) structure, but noticeably differ on more delicate layers. Thus, the two following sentences:

I. Muħammadun qa:dimun li-ziya:rati:

(i.e. Muhammad [is] coming to visit me.)

and II. Muħammadun rajulun muħtaramun

(i.e. Muhammad [is] a respectable man),

are both nominal sentences sharing, on a general primary level, the structure [Subject + Predicate]. In both, a proper name (Muħammad) occupies the subject position; thus, as far as this position is concerned, the two sentences are identical. However, they show differences when it comes to the position 'Predicate', and a detailed analysis of each one of them would make those oppositions clearly discerned:

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1. For further details on the notion of scale of delicacy, see M.A.K. Halliday: "Categories of the theory of Grammar", in Word XVII, 3, 1961; see particularly pp. 258-259 and 272-273.

I. Muħammadun qa:dimun liziya:rati:

[Subject N.P. + Predicative adjectival clause].

a) Subject N.P.:

a Proper name (Muħammadun)

b) Pred. Adj. cl.:

Adj: active participle, masc. sing. in the nominative (qa:dimun)

\+ Prepositional phrase: a preposition (Li-)

\+ N.P.: an annexation construction: N. a substantive, sing., in the genitive + a suffixed 1st pers. pron. sing. standing for "me" (ziya:rat-i:).

II. Muħammadun rajulun muħtaramun

[Subject N.P. + a Predicative nominal group].

a) Subject NP:

a Proper name in the nominative (Muħammadun)

b) Pred. Nom. group:

N.P. a substantive, indef., masc. sing. in the nominative (rajulun) + adj: masc. sing. in the nominative (muħtaramun).

Thus, the contrast between the preceding two nominal sentences occurs at a more delicate layer of analysis, that is, when we come to differentiate between the various possibilities of how a predicative clause can be in a nominal sentence. Only at that stage can one make the distinction between a predicative adjectival clause and a predicative nominal group.

Possibilities for variations, therefore, increase as the scale of delicacy moves towards more delicate layers

of structure until we reach the level of lexicon. This accounts partly for the fact that in language, the lexicon offers more possibilities of choice than syntax which limits by the 'generality' and 'inclusiveness' of its rules the number of primary structures and leads to their higher frequency. Consequently,

> "the degree of grammatical parallelism depends on whether it operates simultaneously on different levels of structure, i.e. whether grammatical sequences are parallel with respect to their primary structures, or also with respect to more delicate layers of their structure." 1

Now, let us examine a selection of verses from A.T.'s poetry to show how syntactic parallelism varies in its significance according to the layers of structure on which it operates.

- Example One [Vol. II, p. 65, l. 15, quoted in this chapter, p.118]:

lahu xuluqun sahlun / wa nafsun ṭiba:ɛuha: laya:nun / wa la:kin ɛirḍuhu min ṣafan saldi:

(He has a complaisant temper and a mild-mannered nature, but his honour [is made] of hard rock).

This line exhibits a tripartite case of parallelism between three nominal sentences which, outside the present metrical context, would read as follows:

S_1: lahu xuluqun sahlun (i.e. He has a complaisant temper)

S_2: [lahu] nafsun ṭiba:ɛuha: laya:nun (i.e. he has a mild-mannered nature)

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1. W.I. Saif: op.cit., p. 143.

S_3: ɛirḍuhu min ṣafan ṣaldin (i.e. his honour is made of hard rock)

Linking the sentences together are: a conjunction of co-ordination, wa (between S_1 and S_2), and the adverbial particle la:kin (i.e. but, yet) which is accompanied, as is often the case, by the conjunction of coordination, wa, prefixed (between S_2 and S_3). The three nominal sentences have the same primary structure: [Subject + Predicate]. At a more delicate layer, however, they exhibit a great contrast between each other. First of all, S_1 and S_2 exhibit a case of nominal sentences with an inverted word-order:[1] their predicate, in the form of a prepositional phrase, is placed in front of the subject. This inverted word-order does not occur in S_3 where the subject, annexed to a possessive pronoun, is definite. Let us now examine each sentence more closely:

S_1: Predicate + Subject:

Predicate: a prep. phrase: [prep. + a suffixed pers. pron. 3rd person masc. sing. (la-hu)] + a subj. N.P.: a nominal group: [N: abstract masc. sing. indef. nominative (xuluqun) + Adj. masc. sing. indef. in the nominative (sahlun)];

S_2: Predicate + Subject:

Predicate: a prep. phrase: [prep. + a suffixed pers. pron. 3rd pers. masc. sing (lahu)] +

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1. In C.A., the usual word-order in a nominal sentence is [Subject + Predicate]. An inverted word-order is however necessary when the subject is indefinite (as is the case in S_1 and S_2) and the predicate is a prepositional phrase (as is also the case in S_1 and S_2), or an adverbial (time or locative).

subj. N.P.: a nominal sentence [subj. NP: N. abstract fem. indef. in the nominative (nafsun) + Pred. nominal clause: N + a suffixed pers. pron. 3rd pers. fem. referring to nafsun (ṭiba:ɛu-ha:) + Pred.: an adj. in the nominative (laya:nun)].

S_3: Subject NP + Predicate:

Subject NP: [N. abstract masc. sing. in the nominative + suffixed possessive pron. 3rd pers. masc. sing (ɛirḍu-hu = definite)] +

Predicate: a prep. phrase [prep. (min) + NP: a substantive, masc. sing. indef. in the genitive (ṣafan) + Adj. masc. sing. indef. in the genitive (ṣaldin)].

As shown by this analysis, the similarity of primary structure between these nominal sentences is not enough to consider them as significantly parallel; this is because, on a more delicate layer, their structure reveals many differences (note especially the inverted word-order in S_1 and S_2, the difference in the type of prepositional phrase, occurring as predicate, between S_1 and S_2 on the one hand, and S_3 on the other; note also the subordinate nominal sentence occurring as subject NP in S_2, etc.). Indeed, a great deal of Arabic sentences can be brought under the [Subject + Predicate] type of structure, and it is by increasing the degree of descriptive delicacy that differences and contrasts start to appear between them.

- Example Two: [Vol. II, p. 273, l. 46]:

ka-n-najmi, ʔin sa:farta ka:na muwa:kiban,
wa ʔiḍa: ħatatta-r-raħla ka:na jali:sa:

([to you, my poetry is] like the [shining]
star which escorts you when you travel and
keeps you company when you encamp).

This line occurs in a passage where the poet is praising his own poetry and its effect on making the fame and glory of his patron, a traditional theme by which the Arab court poets used to conclude their panegyrics. In this line, the poet is making an original comparison between his verse and the star, in order to show his patron that his poetry accompanies him wherever he goes, contributing to his fame.

Syntactically, the verse consists of a parallel between two verbal sentences (underlined above) functioning together as adjectives to the noun introducing it (najm i.e. a star). The two verbal sentences are of the compound type and share the following primary structure:

[ʔin (ʔiḏa:) + a subordinate temporal clause
+ a main clause]

On a more delicate level, however, they exhibit more differences:

S_1: Subordinate clause: [a conjunction (ʔin) + VP = V. intrans. perfect + Actor: a suffixed pers. pron. 2nd pers. masc. sing. (sa:far-ta)] + main clause: [a copula in the perfect (ka:na) + a nominal sentence governed by the copula = Subj. NP: Ø marked pers. pron. 3rd pers. masc. sing. standing for najm + predicate: adj. masc. sing. in the accusative (muwa:kib-an)].

S_2: Subordinate clause: [a conjunction (ʔiḏa:) + V.P. = V. trans., perfect + Actor: a suffixed

pers. pron. 2nd pers. masc. sing (ħaṭaṭ-ta) +
N.P. object: def. article (al-) + N. substantive,
masc. sing. in the accusative (-raħl-a)] +
main clause [a copula in the perfect (ka:na) +
a nominal sentence governed by the copula =
subj. NP: Ø marked pers. pron. 3rd pers. masc.
sing. standing for najm + predicate: adj. masc.
sing. in the accusative (ʝali:s-an)].

Looking more closely into the analysis of the two sentences as illustrated above, one notes that the relationship of syntactic parallelism between them is much stronger, thus more significant, than in the previous example. The contrast occurs only in the class of verb used in the subordinate clause of each sentence: intransitive in S_1 (sa:farta, i.e. you travel), and transitive, hence accompanied with an N.P. direct object in S_2 (ħaṭaṭta-r-raħla, lit. you put down the saddlebags, that is, to encamp). This contrast would not have been pointed out if we restricted our description to the more general level (i.e. more inclusive) of syntactic analysis, and the sentences would have continued to be considered as a perfect case of parallelism , which they are, but only to a certain extent.

- Example Three [Vol. IV, p. 89, l. 1]:

ʔayyu-l-qulu:bi ɛalaykum laysa yanṣadiɛu ?
wa ʔayyu nawmin ɛalaykum laysa yamtaniɛu ?
(How can anyone's heart be unshattered by your [death]? and how can anyone's sleep remain undisturbed?).

The line exhibits a perfect bipartite division

between two interrogative sentences each one occupying a hemistich, and introduced by the interrogative particle ʔayyu[1] (lit. which one of, amongst ...). The syntactic break corresponds with the hemistich break, and the parallel is between two members of the following structure:

S_1: Subject N.P.: [an annexation construction = Interrogative particle, masc. in the nominative (ʔayyu) + N.P.: a def. art. (al-) + N: a substantive masc. plur. in the genitive (qulu:b-i)] + prep. phrase: [a preposition + a suffixed pers. pron. 2nd pers. masc. plur. (ɛalay-kum)] + V.P. [a neg. functional (laysa) + V = imperf. intrans. + Actor: a Ø marked 3rd pers. pron. masc. sing. standing for the above subject NP (yanṣadiɛu)].

S_2: Subject N.P.: [an annexation construction = Interrogative particle, masc. in the nominative (ʔayyu) + N.P.: N. a substantive, indef. masc. sing. in the genitive (nawm-in)] + prep. phrase: [a prep. + a suffixed pers. pron. 2nd pers. masc.

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1. ʔayyu is generally used in interrogative constructions with a following genitive in the singular (as in the 2nd hemistich above) or plural. It can be in any of the grammatical cases, according to the context. The genitive following it may be singular and grammatically indefinite, or plural and definite, with a partitive meaning (as in the 1st hemistich above). It may also be plural and grammatically indefinite conveying in this case a 'qualitative' meaning (e.g. ʔayyu-maxlu:qa:tin ?i.e. what kind of creatures ...?). It should be noted here that this case is an example of interrogative sentences where the intent is not to ask for actual information about the statement, but, rather, to express one's bewilderment or admiration, when confronted with a strange or surprising fact.

plur. (ɛalay-kum)] + V.P. [a neg. functional (laysa) + V = imperf. intrans. + Actor: a Ø marked pers. pron. 3rd pers. masc. sing. standing for the above subject N.P. (yamtaniɛu)].

As can easily be noticed in the preceding analysis, the only difference between the two parallel sentences is in the genitive following the interrogative particle: a definite, plural, substantive noun in S_1 (al-qulu:bi), and an indefinite, singular, substantive noun in S_2 (nawm-in). Quite obviously, the present contrast is so minimal and occurs at such a delicate descriptive layer that one can say it is of little importance and may consequently be ignored.

- Example Four: The following verse exhibits the most perfect case of syntactic parallelism we met so far [Vol. II, p. 209, l. 55]:

huwa naw?u yumnin fi:himu: wa saɛa:datin,
wa sira:ju laylin fi:himu: wa naha:ri:
(He is amongst them the flow of wealth and happiness, and amongst them, [he is] the light of night and day).

Indeed, apart from the subject personal pronoun (huwa, i.e. he) common to both predicate annexation constructions, and absent therefore in the second one, we have an exact correspondence, between them, of noun-to-noun (naw?u / sira:ju, yumnin / laylin), prepositional phrase to prepositional phrase (fi:himu: / fi:himu:), conjunction to conjunction (wa / wa) and noun to noun (saɛa:datin / naha:ri).

Between some of these elements, syntactic equivalence is even reinforced by phonological congruence. Thus, yumnin (i.e. wealth) and laylin (i.e. night) share the same syllabic structure (cvc - cvc). One should also note the "nunation" (mark of indefiniteness) at the end of each one of them; this endows them with the sort of effect we find in internal rhyme (yumnin / laylin).

The exact repetition in both hemistichs and at the same position of the prepositional phrase fi:himu: (i.e. amongst them), and of the conjunction of coordination wa (i.e. and) also comes to reinforce the syntactic equivalence between them.

This example brings us to another essential factor in determining the importance and significance of syntactic parallelism. Indeed, this device can achieve a great degree of intensity if it is reinforced by the repetition of the actual lexical items involved (or some of them). The following lines would illustrate this feature quite clearly [this example has already been quoted in this chapter, sect. 1, p.114]:

1. fa ha:da: yastahillu ɛala: ɣali:li:,
   wa ha:da: yastahillu ɛala: tila:di: ;
2. wa yasqi: da: mada:niba kulli ɛirqin,
   wa yutriɛu da: qara:rata kulli wa:di: .

1. (This one flows over my [burning] thirst /
   and that one flows over my [old] possessions;
2. This one irrigates the runnels of every nerve /
   and that one fills the depth of everywhere.)

The two lines exhibit a perfect example of the bipartite division peculiar to a large proportion of C.A. verse, in general, and A.T.'s verse in particular. This feature has been discussed in the previous section of this chapter in relation to these lines, but more can be said about them. Indeed, their bipartite division is reinforced by a strong syntactic equivalence, respectively, between the two hemistichs of each one of them. Parallelism, here, is supported by a deliberate reiteration of some of the actual lexical items involved in the pattern. The only variables, in line one, are the words ɣali:li: (i.e. my burning thirst) and tila:di: (i.e. my old possessions); but the two are equivalent in terms of their chain relationships with the other identical elements of the pattern. In line two, on the other hand, even the particular form of the demonstrative (da:, instead of ha:da:, i.e. this / that one) occurring in the first half is actually repeated as such in the second one, together with the 'corroborative construct' or tawki:d[1] (kull + Noun in the genitive = kulli ɛirqin, kulli wa:di:, i.e. every nerve, everywhere).

Syntactic parallelism is of even greater significance when reinforced by an additional patterning on the

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1. kull (i.e. all, every) jami:ɛ (i.e. all, the totality of ...) nafsu (i.e. the very ...)etc. form one division of that class of "appositives" (tawa:biɛ) which the Arab grammarians name tawki:d (the corroborative element), because they strengthen the idea of totality or of self, already contained in the matbu:ɛ (i.e. the corroborated element), by the addition of their own. For more details, see W. Wright: op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 278-283.

phonological level (rhyme, alliteration or an identical syllabic structure) or on the morpho- phonological one, that is, when forms in consecutive parallel sequences correspond in what is known in Arabic as "wazn" (or "measure", i.e. the morphological form). This is particularly the case in one of the following lines where A.T. is praising a horse which he was offered [Vol. II, p. 412, l. 11-12]:

1. tuγra-l-ɛuyu:nu bihi: wa yufliqu ʃa:ɛirun
   fi: naɛtihi: ɛafwan wa laysa bi-mufliqi:
2. bi-muṣaɛɛadin min ħusnihi wa muṣawwabin,
   wa mujammaɛin min xalqihi wa mufarraqi:

1. (the eyes are seduced by [his sight] and the [usually] non-inspired poet [finds himself] spontaneously excelling in praising [his beauty],
2. [they are seduced] by his elegant and sturdy build, his [slender] waist and [tall] legs.)[1]

It is the second line which concerns us here. The strong syntactic parallelism between its two hemistichs is supported by an equally strong morpho-phonological congruence between its various constituent elements. Indeed, four times in the line, the same form of the "passive verbal

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1. Line 2, here, is another one of A.T.'s most complicated verses, mainly because of the detailed description he is making of the horse, with terms related to the different parts of the horse's body. The commentary is not of very much help in explaining what the poet exactly meant by those different terms he used (see particularly the obscure and vague explanation given of this line in A.T.'s poetry, Vol. II, p. 412). For all these reasons, I had to rely on my own interpretation of the text which I discussed with some colleagues, and because of that, my translation seems to be not exactly in accordance with the original, despite my attempt to be as close to it as possible.

adjective" (ʔism-mafʕu:l) is repeated:

- muṣaʕʕadin (lit. the back of the horse),
- muṣawwabin (lit. his lower part),
- mujammaʕin (lit. the "gathered" part of his body, his waist),
- mufarraqin (lit. the "scattered" part of his body, his limbs).

This formal equivalence between them is matched with the identical syntactic positions they occupy within the parallel patterns.

To this complex case of parallelism, A.T. adds another one occurring, this time, on the semantic level: in each member of the parallel sequences, there is a semantic opposition (antonymy or antithesis) between two syntactically equivalent elements:

- muṣaʕʕadin (i.e. the top, the back) vs. muṣawwabin (i.e. the lower part)
- mujammaʕin (i.e. the 'gathered' part) vs. mufarraqin (i.e. the 'scattered' part).

Such a type of antithesis is a rhetorical device of which A.T. was quite fond and to which he resorted so often in his verse that it became one of the main distinctive features of his style. As we shall see later, when dealing with semantic parallelism in his poetry, it is by combining such a semantic opposition with such a strong syntactic equivalence, that antithesis in A.T.'s poetry acquired all its aesthetic value and developed into a highly refined rhetorical device.

Finally, to make it a full and general case of parallelism, an identical syllabic structure unifies the remaining elements of the line: these are the two prepositional phrases of the parallel hemistichs, namely min ħusnihi (lit. of his elegance) and fi: xalqihi (lit. in his build). As can easily be noticed, they both share a similar syllabic structure: two medium syllables followed by two short ones.[1]

This combination of parallel patternings of different levels is reflected, on the syllabic-metrical level, by an identical metrical structure (in terms of the number, type and arrangement or order of syllables in the parallel sequences). In this way, this line stands as a typical example of how A.T., when making use of a certain stylistic device, tries with frequent success to cover it from all sides.

From the preceding discussion, it has been shown, by reference to Arabic and to A.T.'s language, how parallelism is not an absolute feature, but rather a matter of degree, depending on whether it operates simultaneously on different layers of structure. Then, it has been shown, with various illustrations from A.T.'s poetry, that the significance and aesthetic value of syntactic parallelism is even greater and more important when accompanied with similar types of patterning on the other formal levels of language (e.g. lexicon, phonology, morphophonology).

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1. In the case of fi: xalqihi, the first syllable is a cvv, that is, a medium open syllable.

4. Some stylistic implications of syntactic parallelism

The most important stage in the discussion of any type of foregrounding is its interpretation, that is, with regard to parallelism, the process by which one tries to find an external connection between the variable elements which are equivalent in the parallel structures. In the next few pages, some additional examples of how A.T. makes use of syntactic parallelism will be discussed, with an attempt, in each case, to find out which stylistic effect it may convey.

- Example One: [Vol. II, pp. 299-300, l. 22-24]:

1. wa qad ɛalima-l-ħazmu-l-ladi: ʔanta rabbuhu:
   bi-ʔan laʔ/yaɛi-l-ɛadmu-l-ladi: ʔanta ha:ʔidu: ;
2. wa qad ɛalima-l-qirnu-l-musa:mi:ka ʔannahu:
   sa-yaγraqu fi-l-baħri-l-ladi: ʔanta xa:ʔidu:;
3. kama: ɛalima-l-mustaʃɛiru:na bi-ʔannahum
   bita:ʔun ɛani-ʃ-ʃiɛri-l-ladi: ʔana qa:ridu:

1. (The firmness of which you are the master knows that the bone which you break [will never] be set;
2. And the opponent who is [trying to] vie with you knows that he will drown in the ocean through which you wade;
3. Likewise, the people pretending to be poets are aware that they are unable [to produce] the verse which I compose.)

In the preceding lines, a pronounced repetitive pattern can easily be noticed. The poet is praising his patron (by a series of images) in the first two lines, while in

the third, he skilfully switches to the self-praise section - very common at the end of his panegyrics - by using the same formal pattern as in the preceding lines, but with a very slight change. The three lines exhibit a strong case of syntactic parallelism, but not a perfect one however. The repetitive pattern is nevertheless strong enough to strike the listener as having a deliberate stylistic effect. All three lines share the following primary structure:

[a conjunctive particle + V.P. (perfect trans.) + a subject-Actor + an Adjectival clause[1] + a direct object clause].

The differences occur at the position of the particle introducing each line(in line 3, kama:, i.e. likewise, occurs instead of wa-qad[2]), and at the position of the adjectival clause (again, line 3 does not contain such a clause).

On the other hand, verbal repetition is very pronounced: in the three lines, the same form of the verb ɛalima (lit. to know, to be aware of) occurs with a following subject-actor. Similarly, within the direct object clause, the same form of "adjectival nominal clauses" is used (with the "connective" or relative pronoun ʔal-ladi: + a pers. pron. subject + predicate):

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1. Except in line three.

2. The conjunctive particle qad with a following verb in the perfect, indicates the termination of an action. Sometimes, it corresponds to the English "already". With a following imperfect, it conveys the meaning of "sometimes, at times, perhaps", or the English "may", "might". As is the case in these lines, it may be preceded by the conj. of coordination "wa" or "fa".

1. ... l-ladi: ʔanta ha:ʔiḍu , (i.e. which you break),
2. ... l-ladi: ʔanta xa:ʔiḍu , (i.e. through which you wade),
3. ... l-ladi: ʔana qa:riḍu , (i.e. which I compose).

The alliterative scheme between the personal pronouns need not be pointed out (ʔanta, ʔanta, ʔana), and the morpho-phonological congruence between the three active participles is quite obvious (ha:ʔiḍu, xa:ʔiḍu, qa:riḍu).

The first two lines have more elements in common, while the third one is slightly different. The pattern wa qad ɛalima, anticipated in line 1, is echoed as such by line 2 with more or less no change, a fact which gives the auditor the impression that such a regularity is going to continue throughout the following verses. But the third line comes, and the pattern undergoes an interruption, deceiving thereby the auditor's expectations: at this stage, the line is not introduced by the particle "wa qad", as in the preceding lines, but by the conjunction kama: (i.e. likewise), which enables the poet to move smoothly on to the next theme of his poem, and draw the parallel between himself and other poets. Then, just when the auditor is expecting a new pattern to be introduced after the preceding one has been broken, the poet goes back to the latter, strengthening in this way the structural continuity of the three lines. It is by means of this device that he managed to raise himself up to the standard of his patron: each one of them is singular in his own way. Thematically, those formal differences are justified by the relationship of 'contextual synonymy' [see the following section] unifying

the first two lines, while the third one, referring to the poet himself and not to the patron any more, had to be different in some way. In other words, the two statements of lines 1 and 2 are roughly synonymous in the context of Arabic panegyrical poetry; in addition, their variable elements, being generally in syntactically equivalent positions, endowed the two statements with broadly equivalent connotations. As for line 3, which refers to the poet and no longer to the patron's qualities, it exhibits the formal differences which coincide with the difference of reference. With regard to lines 1 and 2, it should be noted that it is very typical of syntactic parallelism to set up such a strong equivalence between the variable elements of the parallel pattern.

- Example Two [Vol. IV, pp. 29-30, l. 46-48]:

1. ʔa-lahfi: ʿala: xa:lidin lahfatan
   taku:nu ʔama:mi: waʔuxra:wara:ʔi: ;
2. ʔa-lahfi: ʔida: ma:rada:li-r-rada: ,
   ʔa-lahfi: ʔida: ma-ħtaba: li-l-ħiba:ʔi: ;
3. ʔa-laħdun ħawa: ħayyata-l-mulħidi:na
   wa ladnu taran ħa:la du:na-t-tara:ʔi: ?

1. (I cry woe upon Khalid! [my sadness for his death] will last [in me] my whole life [and linger] after me [for ever];
2. Oh how sad [it is not to see] him in the war [any more]! and how sad [it is not to see him] succouring [the needy people any more]!
3. How can a grave hold the enemy of heretics [that he was]? And how can soft moist earth [come]

to interfere with [the expansion of] wealth [of which he was the source]?)[1]

Like the preceding example, the first two lines of this elegiac passage exhibit a strong case of formal repetition, particularly stressed upon the exclamatory expression of grief ʔalahfi: ɛala:. Its double reiteration in line 2 (which contains two syntactically parallel sentences of the high degree), together with the noticeable succession of long vowels[2] and the phonological congruence between:

- the verb rada: (lit. to get ready for the war, or to deliver deadly attacks in the war) and the noun rada: (lit. death),
- between the verb -ħtaba: (lit. to sit with one's legs drawn up and wrapped in one's garment) and the noun ħiba:ʔi (lit. the act of succouring the needy people and feeding them),
- between ħawa: (i.e. to contain), ħayyah (i.e. a serpent), mulħidi:na (i.e. the heretics) and laħdun (i.e. a grave),
- and finally, between taran (i.e. soft moist earth) and tara:ʔi (i.e. wealth),

all these factors, seem to contribute to the elegiac pomp of the passage. The assonance between ʔa-lahfi:, in lines

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1. Here again, the translation is not very much in accordance with the text, either in wording or in syntax. This is because it is very difficult to reproduce exactly in English such Arabic mourning expressions as ʔalahfi: ɛala: (translated here as: "I cry woe upon ...", in line 1, and as: "How sad I feel ..." in line 2), or the rhetorical form of questions which we find in line 3. Once more, I had to rely on my own interpretation of some parts of the text, the commentary being of little help. Thus, for instance, the metaphor ħayyata-l-mulħidi:na (lit. "to the heretics, he was [like] a deadly serpent", denoting the dead man's strong religious fervour) is translated here by the expression: "enemy of heretics".
2. Indeed, lines 1 and 2 share a total of 18 long vowels, all in

1 and 2, and ʔa-laħdun, in line 3, seems to be the result of a deliberate choice on the part of the poet. While the listener expects the reiteration of the regular expression of grief "ʔa-lahfi:" in line 3, "ʔa-laħdun ..." occurs instead, and the pattern is disturbed, breaking up the formality of the passage and making it more like a genuine expression of strong feelings. These lines illustrate very well how the effect of syntactic parallelism may be the more enhanced when reinforced on the other levels of the poetic structure. In this case, it is phonological patterning mainly which is of most significance.

- Example Three [Vol. II, p. 452, l. 2]:

> ʔi:hin ʔaba: Zaydin fa ḏarɛuka wa:siɛun,
> wa nada:ka fayya:ħun, wa majduka ba:siqu.
> (Oh yes, Abu Zayd, your power is far-reaching,
> your generosity spreading, and your glory
> towering.)

The parallel here is between three nominal sentences (underlined above) which have the following primary structure in common:

[Subject N.P. + Predicate].

Since they have exactly the same structure, the following analysis is equally applicable to all of them:

I. Subject N.P.: an annexation construction = N. abstract, masc. sing. + a suffixed possess. pron. 2nd pers. masc. sing. in the nominative (ḏarɛu-ka, nada: -ka, majdu-ka).

Footnote 2 continued from previous page.

all, between them.

II. Predicate: an adjective: masc. sing. in the nominative (wa:siɛun, fayya:ħun, ba:siqun).

In such a sequence of parallel sentences, the variable elements (particularly the N.P. subjects) positionally equivalent, acquire an additional semantic equivalence. The three predicates have more or less the same semantic connotations. Such a feeling is reinforced by the poetic context in which they occur (a line of a panegyric). All these factors acting together co-operate to make of them a group of 'contextual synonyms'.

- Example Four [Vol. II, p. 452, l. 4]: Trying to assert that no target can be reached without difficulties, the poet produces a line containing a sequence of three 'proverb-like' statements in syntactically parallel sentences:

fi-r-rawdi qurra:sun, wa fi:sayli-r-ruba:
kadarun, wa fi: baɛdi-l-ɣuyu:ti sawa:ɛiqu:
([there are] stinging-nettles in the meadows,
[there is also] muddiness in the water-spring
of the hill, [as well as] thunderbolts in the
[enriching] rain.)

Here again, we have to refer to the poetic context (the textual and the extra-textual one) to understand the connection between the three parallel statements. At face value, there is no relationship between stinging-nettles in the meadows, muddiness in the water-spring and thunderbolts in the rain. But their occurrence in syntactically parallel sentences (the three sentences are nominal, with an inverted word order because their predicates are all prepositional phrases) reduces much of the contrast between

them. Then, when each statement is related to its extra-textual context as well as to the general theme of the poem from which the line was selected, all the remaining differences will disappear, leaving us with three contextually synonymous statements. This example shows particularly that to interpret any case of parallelism, one must take into account all the figurative and symbolic implications of the line in which it occurs.

Examples can easily be added to illustrate the opposite effect of syntactic parallelism, that is, to set up a connection of positional equivalence between semantically convergent elements. However, this would be better dealt with in the next section, when we come to discuss the semantic relationships established by parallelism in A.T.'s poetry.

III. Semantic Parallelism in A.T.'s Poetry

Parallelism in A.T.'s poetry is not only a feature of syntax but may also occur at the lexical-semantic (or thematic) level. It has been shown earlier [this chapter, sect. 1], when discussing the "anticipation - resolution" pattern with a special reference to the rules of Arabic prosody, that this pattern seems to be a natural development of tendencies inherent in the basic rules of Arabic versification. Though this pattern is not an indispensible attribute of Arabic poetry, its occurrence in A.T.'s poetry is quite pronounced. It has also been shown how such a pattern has its counterpart in the verse's

grammatical organization, in the sense that a large amount of A.T.'s verses exhibit a bipartite division sometimes matched with strong syntactic parallelism, sometimes not. In the previous section, such cases of syntactic parallelism were discussed and the bipartite division of the verse pointed out in some examples. It will be our task now to examine how parallelism (in connection with the anticipation - resolution pattern) also manifests its presence at the semantic or thematic aspect of A.T.'s work.

1. The thematic organization of the verse in A.T.'s poetry

It has been mentioned earlier that a single verse of Arabic poetry is generally divided into two members thematically connected, of which the second one comments on, modifies or contrasts with a statement made in the first member.[1] This feature was seen to be particularly important in A.T.'s poetry.

The examples discussed showed that the two members need not be syntactically equivalent, neither do they need to be full sentences; on the contrary, the second member may also be syntactically dependent upon the first one (or vice versa), so that the whole line consists of only one sentence. However, the aesthetic effect of the verse may be the more increased when thematic parallelism corresponds with a syntactic equivalence between the members involved.

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1. To that extent, this feature may be considered as an additional instance of foregrounded parallelism, especially if one recalls its regularity and consistent recurrence in Arabic poetry.

With regard to A.T.'s poetry, it is necessary to distinguish two different elements which the poet may employ in constructing his verse in this way. The first element one may call "semantic" to show that it has to do with the ideas which constitute the theme of the verse. We shall see that there is a set of definable semantic relationships appearing frequently in A.T.'s poetry, and that the poet has a stock of such relationships from which he can draw, just as he draws from a stock of words, themes, comparisons or stylistic devices.

The second element which contributes to establishing a relationship between the members of the verse is the "rhetorical element". It is very often the case that the second member of a given verse, besides being a semantic complement to the first one, may also be its rhetorical counterpart, in the sense that individual words, images or sound patterns of the first member may be complemented in the second. Very frequently, in A.T.'s poetry, a number of figures of speech, or schemes, are used to reinforce the semantic relationships in the different lines of his poems. Very often also, the search for rhetorical wit turns out to be the major element that unifies the various parts of the poem and the members of the verse. This is indeed a common feature in A.T.'s poetry for which he has been strongly attacked by some of his critics. In the following line, for instance [Vol. II, p. 110, l. 4]:

wa kam ʔaħrazat minkum ɛala: qubħi qaddiha:
suru:fu-n-nawa: min murhafin ħasani-l-qaddi:

(Many is the time the ugly chances of travel

have [separated you] from the delicate slender [lady]). The muṭa:baqah or antithesis between qubħu-l-qaddi (lit. ugly-shaped) and ħasani-l-qaddi (lit. well-shaped, graceful, slender) is, apart from the metre and rhyme the sole poetic element in the verse (perhaps also the image of the "ugly-shaped" chances of travel). It is by means of this device alone that the poet has expressed his attitude towards the diversities of time and the chances of travel, by bringing them into a relationship of opposition, or antithesis, with the epithet through which the beloved lady is referred to (i.e. ħasani-l-qaddi).

In C.A. poetry, it is not usual for a rhetorical device to provide the only element of balance and structural unity between the two members of the verse. This is at least the opinion of the conservative literary critics. Usually, they assert, such devices come to support the ideas relating the two members and therefore, play a secondary role. This is not always the case with A.T.'s verse, however, and as just mentioned, the search for rhetorical wit has often been the major, if not the only element that provides unity to his verse.

The syntactic relationships outlined in the preceding section are in many cases identical with the semantic relationships. When we say that the second member is an appositive to a word in the first member, or that it is a circumstantial clause defining a word introduced by the first member, or an adjectival clause defining a word present in the first member,

> "We are simply referring to conceptual relationships by means of terms that were intended to

> designate not the conceptual relationships themselves, but the ways in which language allows us to express such relationships." 1

Similarly, when we classify the first member of a verse as a temporal clause subordinate to a main clause occurring as the second member of that verse, we are only referring to the nature of the conceptual, or semantic, relationships between the two members.

But there are many verses, as R.P. Scheindlin remarks,

> "whose members are related in ways not adequately defined by grammatical terminology. Thus, two members, one of which is syntactically subordinate to the other, may nevertheless be conceptually parallel, and this parallelism be the more effective for the clauses' being on different syntactic levels.[2] Furthermore, two members of a verse may be syntactically parallel without this fact alone being very indicative of the conceptual relationship between them.[3] In fact, it is where parallelism is present that grammatical terminology appears to provide the least adequate definitions of the conceptual relationships between members." 4

R.P. Scheindlin's statement will be seen to be pertinently true with regard to many cases of semantic parallelism in

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1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 62; J. Bentham discusses this aspect of language which he calls "linguistic fictions" in his book: "Theory of Fictions", ed. and presented by C.K. Ogden, London, 1939; R. Jakobson also refers to the same feature in his article: "Poetry of grammar and grammar of poetry" in Lingua XXI (1968) pp. 597-609.

2. See, for instance, the two lines discussed in Sect. 1 of this chapter, p.116 .

3. And also without this fact alone being the focus of foregrounding. This is to confirm our assumption that syntactic parallelism is the more interesting when reinforced by any sort of patterning on the other levels of language.

4. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 62.

A.T.'s poetry to be discussed in what follows.

2. The major types of semantic parallelism in A.T.'s poetry

Parallelism of members, or parallelism that draws a semantic relationship between different members in one or more verses, is a stylistic feature to be differentiated from the syntactic type of parallelism. With the latter, parallelism designates the balanced pattern that the poet succeeds in creating between two or more sentences, clauses or phrases with equal syntactic value. In what follows, parallelism refers not to these syntactic relationships but rather to the types of relationships which the poet draws (by the use of lexical elements, individual words) between the ideas embodied in his verse, creating thereby a sensation of balance between them. Two examples were given earlier to show that both types of parllelism may occur together [see chap. III, sect. 2, p. 145-147]. The following verse also confirms this possibility [Vol. IV, p. 110, l. 22]:

> fa ya: ʕa:riḍan li-l-ʕurfi ʔaqlaʕa muznuhu: /
> wa ya: wa:diyan li-l-ju:di jaffat masa:yiluh
> (Oh you, the downpour of beneficence whose clouds have passed by, and you, the river of generosity whose bed has dried up!)

In the present line, from one of A.T.'s elegies, two syntactically equivalent hemistichs exhibit a perfect case of semantic parallelism, namely what may be called parallelism of synonymy.

They both share the following structure:

[Subject + Predicate];

I. Subject:

a conjunction of coordination (fa, wa) + a vocative particle (ya:) + a noun in the vocative (ɛa:riḍan, wa:diyan) + a prep. phrase = prep. (li-) + NP: a def. art. + N: abstract, masc. sing. (al-ɛurfi, al-ju:di);

II. Predicate:

a V.P.: perfect, intrans. (ʔaqlaɛa, jaffat) + subject - Actor: annexation construction = N. substantive, masc. sing. in S_1 (muznu), substantive, fem. plur. in S_2 (masa:yilu) + a suffixed possess. pron. 3rd pers. masc. sing. (h) referring to ɛa:riḍan in S_1, and wa:diyan in S_2.

Thematically, the two hemistichs may be considered as synonymous. One speaks here rather of contextual synonymy. The two members balance each other in a sort of equative relationship. The images of "a downpour of beneficence whose clouds have gone away" and of "a river of generosity whose bed has dried up" are part of the stock theme of C.A. elegies. In that context, and to a great extent because of syntactic parallelism, the lexical elements ɛurf (i.e. beneficence) and ju:d (i.e. generosity), ɛa:riḍ (i.e. a downpour) and wa:di: (a river),"a dried-up river bed" and "a passed-by cloud", all are respectively synonymous pairs, endowed with the same connotations, so that one can say that the two sentences are just repetitive of each other.

However, semantically parallel members need not

be syntactically equivalent, as the following line confirms it [Vol. I, p. 141, l. 11]:

wa qad yakhamu-s-sayfu-l-musamma: maniyyatan,
wa qad yarjiʿu-l-marʔu-l-muḍaffaru xa:ʔiba:

(the [sharp] sword [usually] called death may become blunt, and the [usually] successful man may come back with defeat.)

The two hemistichs of this line may appear to be syntactically equivalent, but this is not the case. They are however semantically related to each other. The poet in fact meant to draw an equation between the two members of the line with their constituent elements. Thus, the sharpness of the sword (referred to by the metonymic figure of "the sword called death", so much it is deadly) is equated to "a successful man", and the "bluntness" of that very sword is equated with the man's "failure". The two statements are synonymous.

In general, semantically parallel members in A.T.'s poetry juxtapose synonymous or antithetical statements. As with syntactic parallelism, semantic parallelism is not an absolute feature, but rather a matter of degrees; there is no absolute synonymy, neither is there an absolute opposition or antithesis. There is rather a scale of synonymity and antithesis on which the parallel members may be ranged by degrees.

A. Parallelism of synonymy in A.T.'s poetry: The first type of semantic parallelism exhibiting the highest degree of synonymity is well illustrated by the following line [Vol. I, p. 186, l. 22]:

fa ya: waʃala-d-dunya: bi-ʃayba:na la: taɣiḍ,
wa ya: kawkaba-d-dunya: bi-ʃayba:na: la: taxbu
(Oh you, the dripping water of the world, with the [tribe of] ʃayba:n do not recede, and you, the star of the world, with the [tribe of] ʃayba:n do not die.)

This line is made up of two sentences each expanding in one hemistich. Although the main lexical items of the two halves (i.e. waʃal = dripping water, kawkab = star, la:taɣiḍ = do not recede, la:taxbu = do not die) are not synonymous pairs, the meaning of the two members is basically the same. Both of them express the poet's esteem and high attachment to the ʃayba:n tribe. The images used to convey his thoughts are typical "motifs" of panegyrical poetry in C.A. and in this context, "water that recedes" (i.e. life going away little by little) and a "star that dies" (i.e. no more light or sun in this life) are poetically equivalent statements. In other words, within this special context, the two members of the parallel structure have the same connotations, regardless of the literal meaning of the corresponding pairs of words.

In addition, the line exhibits a highly refined example of syntactic parallelism. Most words of the first half remain unchanged in the second. The only variables (i.e. waʃal / kawkab, taɣiḍ / taxbu), being in syntactically equivalent positions, are put together in closely corresponding pairs. The overall syntactic structure of the two members is exactly the same. Had

the parallel variables, already so closely matched in their syntactic position, been exactly synonymous, the verse would have been absurdly banal. As it is, their formal similarity serves to support the semantic connection between them, ensuring that they will be understood as synonymous. To use Scheindlin's words, "the verse is but one degree removed from absolute synonymity".[1]

A similar type of synonymy is featured in the following line [Vol. I, p. 194, l. 49]:

bi ju:dika tabyaddu-l-xutu:bu ʔida:dajat,
wa tarjiʕu fi: ʔalwa:niha-l-ħijaju-ʃ-ʃuhbu:

(with your generosity the black misfortunes clear away, and the all dark years regain their [lively] colours.)

Here, the poet is praising the patron's generosity which helps his people to survive despite the difficulties. This is expressed by two sentences which have the prepositional phrase (bi-ju:dika, i.e. with your generosity) in common. In the second hemistich, the image of "the all-dark years" (i.e. years of hardship with no rain or pasture) which regain their lively green colours (with grass and pastures) thanks to the patron's generosity, corresponds to the image occurring in the first hemistich of the "black misfortunes" which "become white", i.e. clear away. Both images are part of the stock theme of Arabic panegyrics, and both of them share the same connotations. In a word, the two sentences forming this line are contextually synonymous.

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1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 65.

Lower grades of synonymy are common in A.T.'s poetry. In the following line, we have a good example of how the apparent redundancy inherent in exact synonymity between the members may be avoided [Vol. I, p. 188, l. 28]:

ʔaqu:lu li-ʔahli-t-taɣri qad ruʔiba-t-taʔa: ,
wa ʔusbiɣati-n-naɛma:ʔu, wa-ltaʔama-ʃ-ʃaɛbu .

(I say to the 'borderlanders' [i.e. the people living in the borderlands]: the rent is patched, happiness amply bestowed and people unified.)

Once again, there is some syntactic correspondence between the various members forming the line: three sentences (S_1 = ruʔiba-t-taʔa:, S_2 = ʔusbiɣati-n-naɛma:ʔu, S_3 = -ltaʔama-ʃ-ʃaɛbu) are syntactically equivalent; they are three separate direct objects to the verb ʔaqu:lu (i.e. I say) beginning the line. Such a division of the verse into a main clause (ʔaqu:lu li-ʔahli-t-taɣri = I say to the borderlanders) and a subordinate clause, itself made up of three parallel sentences, would give the impression that there is no bipartite division in it, but rather a division in four separate parts. However, I believe that this is not the case. Indeed, between the first hemistich (including the main clause and the first of the parallel sentences) and the second hemistich (including the remaining two), there is a close semantic relationship, a case of synonymous parallelism of a lower grade than the preceding examples. Synonymy here is between S_1, on the one hand, and S_2 and S_3 on the other. S_1 introduces a vague statement: "the rent is patched"; - what rent? what were its external

aspects? how was it repaired? It is left to the remaining two sentences to tell us more about that: people are now satisfied; they are "happy" and "unified" at last. Accordingly, the division of the line should, I think, concord with the hemistich break. The first member would contain the main clause and S_1, while the second member would include S_2 and S_3, of which, each one on its own introduces some information which is lacking in S_1. The three parallel sentences are broadly synonymous, although the individual words that make them up are not related in meaning. But this fact does not mean that the idea of the first is merely repeated in the second sentence and in the third. It is rather explained unobtrusively hence, without disturbing the impression of synonymity. This progression from vague to specific accords perfectly with Scheindlin's hypothesis concerning the anticipation - resolution pattern inherent in the structure of Arabic verse:

> "Having heard the theme stated in the verse's opening, the auditor expects that it will not merely be dropped but that something more will be said about it. One of the possibilities available to the poet is to repeat the idea in different words, an option which allows him to display his rhetorical ingenuity,[1] and to satisfy the auditor's desire for more information. Thus he intentionally makes the first member somewhat vague, leaving open in the auditor's mind a question which he then answers in the second member, strengthening the sensation of resolution." [2]

The following three lines exhibit an even clearer example of such synonymy [Vol. II, p. 90, l. 24-26]:

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1. Illustrated in our example by the strong syntactic parallelism between three sentences of equal length and equal number of words.

2. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 67.

1. wa da:ni-l-jada: ta?ti: ɛaṭa:ya:hu min ɛalin,
   wa manṣibuhu waɛrun, maṭa:liɛuhu jurdu: ;
2. fa-qad nazala-l-murta:du minhu bi-ma:jidin,
   mawa:hibuhu ɣawrun, wa su?daduhu najdu: ;
3. wafa: bi-l-?ama:ni: lam yuriq ma:?a wajhihi:
   miṭa:lun, wa-lam yaqɛud bi-?a:ma:lihi-r-raddu: .

1. ([He is a great] benefactor whose gifts pour down [like rain], whose rank is hard [to attain] and the path to it difficult [to follow];
2. His intender finds in him a noble man, whose favours are [as easy to obtain as traversing] lowlands, [but] whose sovereignty is [as hard to reach as going across a region of] highlands;
3. He fulfills [all people's] wishes; he is [never] dishonoured by a delay, nor are [people's] hopes [in him] restrained by a refusal.)

In line 1, the adjectival clause ta?ti: ɛaṭa:ya:hu min ɛalin (i.e. whose gifts pour down like rain) is broadly synonymous to the first part of the line da:ni-l-jada: (i.e. a great benefactor). The second hemistich is also divided into two synonymous statements of which the second one explains the first which remained somewhat vague (his rank is hard to attain [because] the path to it is difficult to follow). Both of them illustrate a subtle case of formal parallelism (two nominal sentences, with two single words each; syllabic identity between the two predicates waɛrun / jurdun: cvc - cvc).

Similarly in line 2, the second hemistich explains and develops the vague statement made by the epithet ma:jidin

(i.e. a noble man) referring to the patron and occurring in the first half. But a new element of antithesis is introduced here by the image of the two antonyms ɣawrun (i.e. lowlands) and najdun (i.e. highlands) to oppose the easiness by which the patron's gifts can be obtained (an aspect of his nobility), to the difficulties which accompany any attempt to vie with his sovereignty and glory (one more piece of information concerning the patron's nobility). Once again, the two nominal sentences forming the second hemistich are related by a strong formal parallelism which, in turn, links them to the second hemistich of line 1.

Finally, in line 3, the first member wafa: bi-l-ʔama:ni: (i.e. he fulfills all people's wishes) anticipates an idea which is further explained in the second member.

The three lines refer to the patron's glory. A single prose sentence would suffice as a paraphrase for this succession of synonymous parallels. But the possibility for A.T. to develop the idea and repeat it in different words allows him to display his rhetorical wit and exhibit thereby a variety of images. These images in turn allow the listener to enjoy, each time, the discovery of new aspects of the original idea. From this point of view, it is worthwhile noting the gradual move from the inaccessible abstract (da:ni-l-jada:, a great benefactor, ma:jid, a noble man, suʔdad, sovereignty, wafa: bi-l-ʔama:ni:, he fulfills all people's wishes) to the immediately palpable concrete (gifts pouring down like rain, sovereignty difficult to attain like highlands, gifts easy to obtain like

traversing lowlands).

Now, let us examine the following two lines of one of A.T.'s erotic introductions [Vol. I, p. 385, l. 4-5]:

1. waħʃiyyatun tarmi-l-qulu:ba ʔiḍa-ɣtadat
   wasna:, fa-ma: taṣṭa:du ɣayra-ṣ-ṣi:di: ;
2. la: ħazma εinda mujarribin fi:ha: wala:
   jabba:ru qawmin εindaha: bi-εani:di: .

1. (Her wild beauty strikes the hearts when she adopts a gaze heavy with slumber, [with such a beauty] she [can] hunt down the haughtiest [of men];
2. The prudence of the experienced man would fail him [in her presence], and a tyrant would not be able to resist her).

Again, line 1 exhibits a case of synonymy similar to the preceding example: fa-ma: taṣṭa:du ɣayra-ṣ-ṣi:di (lit. she hunts down the haughtiest of men only) comes to explain and develop the statement introduced in the first part of the line. Contextually, the two members are synonymous without the occurrence of lexically synonymous pairs.

Likewise, line 2 contains two members, synonymous within the broad definitions of synonymy presupposed in this discussion. This verse is particularly related to the second hemistich of the preceding one (i.e. she can hunt down the haughtiest of men), which it develops in more detail. We can therefore speak of a parallelism of synonymy between the two lines. A simple test to confirm such an assumption is the possibility of paraphrasing the two lines in a single prose sentence like: "her beauty is

irresistible". However, in the second member (i.e. line 2), we have an additional element of antithesis in the formulation of the statement, which does not occur in the first one: while in the first line the statement is put in a positive, affirmative sentence, the formulation of the same thought, in the second one, is changed to a doubly negative sentence (la: ... wa-la: ..., i.e. neither ... nor ...).[1] This seems to make the second statement, with its two parallel members, more categorical than its first counterpart.

B. Parallelism of opposition or 'antithesis' in A.T.'s poetry

This type of parallelism is, by far, the most common in A.T.'s poetry. It consists of the juxtaposition of two sentences, phrases or words, which turn out to be opposites in meaning. A very simple example may be found in the following lines [Vol. I, p. 368, l. 41-42]:

1. qad batattum ɣarsa-l-mawaddati wa-ʃ-ʃaħ-na:ʔi fi: qalbi kulli qa:rin wa ba:di: ;
2. ʔabyaḍu: ɛizzakum, wa waddu: nada:kum, fa-qarawkum min biɣḍatin wa wida:di: .
1. (You spread out the plants of love and hatred in the heart of every villager and every bedouin;
2. They hated your glory but loved your bounty; and so, you are subject to hatred and love.)

The two lines are built up around a ṭiba:q or muṭa:baqah

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1. Normally, line 2 should be translated as follows:
   2. (The prudence of the experienced man would not serve him [in her presence], neither would a tyrant be able to resist her.)

(i.e. opposition, antithesis) between mawaddah and ʃaħna:ʔ or buγḍ (i.e. love vs. hatred) which are lexical "antonyms". In line 1, the two opposites are in identical syntactic positions: both mawwadah and ʃaħna:ʔ are annexed to γars (i.e. the plants of ...). Similarly, in line 2, the lexical antonyms ʔabγaḍu: (i.e. they hated) and waddu: (i.e. they loved) occur in two syntactically parallel sentences forming the first hemistich (both have the structure: V.P. + subject-Actor + direct object). The two direct objects, namely ɛizzakum (i.e. your glory) and nada:kum (i.e. your bounty), are closely related in their connotations, "bounty" and free giving being a mark or an aspect of "glory". In this way, the poet succeeds in bringing to the foreground the paradoxical attitude of people towards similar aspects of his patron's fame.

This type of parallelism is well-suited to contrasting situations in the past with others in the present, a theme particularly common in A.T.'s erotic introductions or in the sections of self-praise when they occur in his poems, as is the case in the following line [Vol. p. 143, l. 17]:

wa kuntu-mraʔan ʔalqa-z-zama:na musa:liman ,
fa-ʔa:laytu la: ʔalqa:hu ʔilla: muħa:riba: .
(I used to be a man who faces [the diversities of] time with peace, but I swore I should face them only with war.)

The parallel words in this bipartite verse are true antonyms: musa:liman (i.e. with peace) and muħa:riban (i.e. with war). This antithetical parallelism is further

reinforced on the syntactic level by the opposition between:

a) the imperfect ʔalqa: (lit. I face), in the first hemistich, to which the perfect of the copula ka:na (i.e. to be) is prefixed, imparting to it thereby the idea of duration or continuity in the past[1] (kuntu ... ʔalqa:, i.e. I used to be ... who faces ...),

b) and the imperfect of the second hemistich, preceded by the negative particle la:, referring to the future (la: ʔalqa:hu, lit. I shall not face it).

A similar effect is given by the antithetical parallelism present in the following lines where the poet is comparing between the past state of the Adhrabijan area, before the caliph's conquest, and its present state, after the conquest [Vol. III, p. 132, l. 4-7]:

1. fa-li-ʔadrabi:ja:na xtiya:lun baʿdama:
   ka:nat muʿarrasa ʿabratin wa-naka:li: ;
2. samujat wa nabbahana: ʿala-stisma:jiha:
   ma: ħawlaha: min naḍratin wa jama:li:
3. wa kada:ka lam tufrit kaʔa:batu ʿa:ṭilin
   ħatta: yuja:wiraha-z-zama:nu bi-ħa:li:
4. ʔaṭlaqtaha: min kaydihi wa kaʔannama:
   ka:nat bihi: maʿqu:latan bi-ʿiqa:li: .

1. ([Now, at last] Adhrabijan [may] enjoy pride [and delight] after it used to be a settling-place for tears and tyranny;

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1. This is equivalent to the imperfect of the Romance languages (e.g. French: Il lisait).

2. She was odious [i.e. Adhrabijan] and her odiousness was the more increased [in our eyes] by the splendour and beauty of her surroundings;
3. Likewise, the sorrow of a jewelless lady grows deeper when she is brought next to a lady [adorned] with jewels;
4. You rescued her from his evil plotting [i.e. the tyrant], it was as though she was hobbled.)

The four lines are built up around the opposition between an unfavourable state in the past and a favourable one in the present. Each line is divided into two opposite parts. In line 1, there is no true pair of antonyms, but it is the context which puts the word ʔixtiya:l (i.e. pride, delight) in contrast with ɛabrah (lit. a tear) and naka:l (i.e. tyranny, severe punishment). In line 2, we are closer to a true lexical antonymy between the verb samujat (i.e. she was odious), and the nouns nadrah and jama:l (i.e. splendour and beauty).[1]

The comparison between the two situations is put in a proverbial form in line 3. This is a process to which A.T. often resorts in his poetry. In this line, the proverb expresses in figurative language the universal truth contained in the preceding line (i.e. that odiousness is

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1. The classical rhetoricians of Arabic would claim that in a line like the present one (i.e. line 2), it would be more suitable and appropriate for the poet to use a word for "attractiveness" to oppose the adjective "odious" of the first hemistich (both are direct antonyms), rather than the words for "splendour" and "beauty" used here, which are less than true antonyms with samujat (she was odious). See for instance the Arab rhetoricians' treatment of the feature of muqa:balah (i.e. parallelism) in: Ibn Rasiq: op.cit., Vol. II, pp.15-20; al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 337; Ibn-al-ʔaṯi:r: "al-Maṯalu-s-Sa:ʔir", Vol. II, pp. 279-292, etc.

the more increased when surrounded by beauty and splendour). To that extent, one can also speak of a contextual synonymy between lines 2 and 3. In the latter, the bipartite division corresponds with a pairing of true antonyms, namely ʕa:ṭil (i.e. a jewelless lady) and ħa:li: (i.e. a lady adorned with jewels).

Finally, in line 4, exact antonymy opposes the verb ʔaṭlaqa (i.e. to rescue, deliver, release) and the words maʕqu:lah (i.e. hobbled) and ʕiqa:l (i.e. a cord or a rope). It should be mentioned also that the second member of this verse (which begins from wa-kaʔannama:, it was as though) introduces another example of comparison: here, Adhrabijan, under occupation, is compared to a camel whose legs are hobbled, and which comes to be freed by the caliph. This technique is quite effective, and its function in the structure of the verse is very similar to that of parallelism. In fact, while parallelism operates mainly on the verbal level, in comparison, it is primarily imagery that provides the correspondence.

Antithetical parallelism is a very typical device of A.T.'s style. Though he did not originate it in C.A., he exploited it in such a subtle and complex manner that made it sound new, strange and striking in the mind of his listeners. In the following line from one of his panegyrics, we have a good example of this characteristic [Vol. I, p. 114, l. 15]:

si:ɣat lahu:ʃi:matun ɣarra:ʔu min ḏahabin /
la:kinnaha: ʔahlaku-l-ʔaʃya:ʔi li-ḏ-ḏahabi: .

(His noble nature is made of gold, but it is the most destructive to gold [i.e. denoting his generosity and free-giving].)

The bipartite division of the verse (it falls at the hemistich break) corresponds with a parallelism of opposition between the two members. In the first hemistich, the poet chooses the element "gold" to express the uniqueness and greatness of his master's moral qualities. He did not however put it in a form of comparison saying, for instance: "His qualities are like gold in its uniqueness", but rather put it in the form of an absolute statement: "His noble nature is made of gold". This is in order to prepare for that strange and paradoxical effect which the line acquires as soon as we come to its second member: "His nature is made of gold, but it is the most destructive to gold", so much he used to be generous in his gifts. This example shows particularly that with antithetical parallelism, the single hemistichs standing alone have little effect, the main effect deriving from the juxtaposition of the two members together. In fact, this is true with all other types of parallelism.

A similar effect can be found in the following line which describes one aspect of a woman's beauty [Vol. III, p. 213, l. 6]:

bayḍa:ʔu tasri: fi-ḍ-ḍala:mi fa-yaktasi:
nu:ran, wa tasrubu fi-ḍ-ḍiya:ʔi fa-yuḍlimu.

([She was] a fair-coloured [lady] who fills the darkness with light, and outshines the [radiant] brightness.)

This line differs from the preceding one in that it contains exact pairs of lexical antonyms (ḍala:m, i.e. darkness, ḍiya:ʔ, brightness, and nu:r, i.e. light). Its effect, however, is the same as the one noticed in the previous example. It results from that strange juxtaposition of paradoxical statements: a darkness which loses its colour to become filled with light, on the one hand, and a brightness suddenly 'transformed' into darkness on the other.[1] As can be easily noticed, though the two members of this line, taken separately, are grammatically meaningful, hence capable of standing alone, the whole justification of each member's existence and effect lies in its juxtaposition with its counterpart. Such a complex use of antithetical parallelism, so common in A.T.'s poetry, reveals his 'dualistic - relativistic' way of thinking and viewing life, which he openly expressed when speaking of Adhrabijan in those two lines quoted above:

1. samujat wa nabbahana: ɛala-stisma:jiha:
   ma: ħawlaha: min naḍratin wa jama:li: ,
2. wa kaḍa:ka lam tufriṭ kaʔa:batu ɛa:ṭilin
   ħatta: yuja:wiraha-z-zama:nu bi-ħa:li: .

1. (She was odious [i.e. Adhrabijan] and her odiousness was the more increased [in our eyes] by the splendour and beauty of her surroundings;
2. Likewise, the sorrow of a jewelless lady grows deeper when she is brought next to a lady [adorned] with jewels.)

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1. Literally translated, the second hemistich should read as follows: (... and she walks in the [radiant] brightness and therefore it becomes dark).

Sometimes, a poetic device such as this can be abused in his poetry, and when it is, it degenerates into a mechanical pairing off of words and sentences for which he was often criticized. But at its best, it can reveal a perception of the underlying contrasting aspects of nature and, simultaneously, strengthens the structure of his poems. In the lines we have discussed, we dealt with varieties of perfect antithetical couplets, natural and unforced. In every one of them, and despite the sharp contrast between the different members, one cannot help noticing the strange affinity which they possess, so that he may say in every case: what a contrast, yet what a perfect match.

The examples of semantic parallelism discussed here have been chosen from A.T.'s poetry to illustrate the progression on the scale from extreme lexical synonymity to extreme lexical opposition. The two types distinguished appear to be convenient reference-points on this progression and how it is actualized in A.T.'s work, although the exact position of a given verse on the scale may be open to discussion. We have seen, for instance, examples where contextual synonymity concurs with antithetical parallelism in lines which, sometimes, exhibit a great deal of formal patterning (e.g. syntactic parallelism, syllabic correspondence, and the like).

To conclude, it would be futile to attempt to catalogue all the types of semantic relationships that could possibly exist within the framework of parallelism, or, more exactly, which do exist in the countless verses

of A.T.'s poetry; in fact, those relationships are as numerous as the language permits and the imagination of the poet may invent. Many of them have already been accounted for when dealing with syntactic parallelism.[1] Consequently, no more has been attempted here than to analyse the most frequent of them in A.T.'s poetry, the emphasis being placed particularly upon how the poet tries to combine between various rhetorical devices (antithesis, comparison, proverbs, formal parallelism, etc.) and the ideas which make up the main subject of his verses. A further result of such a survey is the discovery that those relationships which are of most frequent occurrence in his poetry have one characteristic element in common, namely the element of balance between the poet's statements in the verse. In other words, each statement is, whenever possible, followed by a corresponding one, whether similar (i.e. synonymous), antithetical, in the form of a comparison or in a proverbial form. Besides confirming the hypothesis of the general bipartite division of the single verse in A.T.'s poetry (and, more generally, in C.A. poetry), such a feature also reflects the presence of a neat formal organization in his poetry by means of foregrounded parallelism.

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1. And many of them have been also subject to various treatments by the Classical rhetoricians. One may consult any book on Arabic Rhetoric of the above-mentioned to have an idea on how they dealt with this stylistic feature.

CHAPTER IV

PHONOLOGICAL PARALLELISM IN A.T.'s POETRY

Introduction

Seeking the aspects of development in C.A. poetry with regard to its topics and themes is hardly significant and can rarely lead to conclusive results, for it only shows the continuity of the same poetic genres, treated in more or less the same manner from one generation to another, and we are always dealing with panegyrics, self-praise poetry, satires, descriptive and love poetry or the like. Its development, on the contrary, is to be sought in the poetic diction, in the style and manner of composing, that is, in the poetic 'craft' itself and the norms and devices related to it.

Looking into the large body of Arabic literary criticism, one notes that the Arab critics generally divide the poets into two categories, according to whether or not their work exhibits signs of elaboration and studied style (ṣanɛah). Accordingly, the distinction is made between the 'gifted poet' (maṭbu:ɛ),

> "for whom poetry comes easy, and who masters the rhymes ... In his composition, you can clearly perceive the splendour of his [own] nature and the rich polychromy of his natural disposition. When set to the test, he never stammers or appears under stress", 1

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1. Ibn Qutayba: "Aʃ-ʃiɛr wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ", p. 90; the translation is by V. Cantarino: "Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age", p. 60.

and the 'artificial' one (mutakallif, ṣa:ħibu-ṣ-ṣanɛah) "who amends his poems [as] with the tool for straightening lances, trims it with long scrutiny, and examines it again and again ..."[1]. Preference was generally shown to works of 'gifted' poets, and men of letters usually rejected the 'artificial' and abstruse style. Within this context, Ibn Qutayba (the erudite literary critic from Baghdad, d. 889 A.D.) expresses his personal preference by saying that:

> "artificial poetry, no matter how excellent and perfect it might be, can never hide from the eyes of the learned the long reflection the author had to suffer, the great stress, the sweat of his forehead, the great number of poetic licences needed, the elision of conceits that were necessary and the addition of others that were not." 2

Later on, Al-ɛaskari: (d. 1005 A.D.) in his Ṣina:ɛatayn (The Book of the Two Arts, i.e. poetry and prose) was to express the same attitude when he said that "the most excellent discourse is that which is lucid and easy consisting neither of abstruse nor of obscure signification".[3]

Similar kinds of statements were expressed here and there by different other critics; but they were all doomed to remain confined to theory, for in practice one notes that the general trend in Arabic poetics was markedly inclined towards an artificial style. This is mainly due to the insistence on the artistic supremacy of the poetry of the heroic days, and on the necessity of learning for

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1. Ibn Qutayba: Ibid., p. 78, translated by Cantarino: Ibid., p. 60.
2. Ibn Qutayba: Ibid., p. 88, translated by Cantarino: Ibid., p. 60.
3. Al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-Ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 67; see also Cantarino: Ibid., p. 60.

poetic mastery [see General Introduction, Chap. I], two factors which immediately reduced the concept of poetry to that of a linguistic practice depending only on technical training and repetition. The requirement that the poet should have a somewhat bookish learning was traditional and so important that it became a pre-requisite for poetic excellency, leaving the poets with no other alternative but to follow already established patterns.

This was however the case even with poets and poetry of earlier ages, including the pre-Islamic poets themselves, who were supposed to be the example for 'natural' poetry and 'easy-flowing' verses. Thus, elaborate work on poetry with amendment and improvement was a well-known feature of the work of the pre-Islamic poet Zuhayr Ibn Abi: Sulma:, one of the famous authors of the "Seven Odes" (the pre-Islamic poetic masterpieces); he and others who followed him were called the "Slaves of Poetry" (ɛabi:du-ʃ-ʃiɛr), and their works known under the name of ħawliyya:t, that is, poems in the composition of which the poet spent a year (ħawl) of scrutiny and careful examination.[1] Zuhayr himself learned this manner of poetic practice from his poet-teacher Aws-Ibn ħajar, and the same feature of learning and elaborateness went on with his own disciples for several generations. Such a practice was indeed appreciated by the Arab critics themselves;

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1. See Ibn Raʃi:q: "Al-ɛumdah", Vol. I, pp. 129-133.

significantly enough, Ibn Raʃi:q (d. 1070 A.D.) writes:

> "I do not deny that when a verse comes naturally [maṭbu:ɛan] with the greatest perfection, and another one about the same idea comes with artificial elaborateness [maṣnu:ɛan] also with the greatest perfection, when the lack of naturalness does not make an impression and its mannerism is not obvious, the artificial verse is the more excellent of the two." 1

Such a statement, in fact, gives a clear idea of how the question of 'naturalness' and 'artificiality' was to the Arabs just a matter of degree and 'quantity', since as long as artificial elaborateness is "perfect" and "does not make an impression" on the listener (and this is only by being in a restricted quantity), the poetry concerned can still be appreciated and its author praised. Moreover, one can assert, and this is further reinforced by reference to pre-Islamic poetry itself,[2] that it is hardly possible to consider only the element of 'gift' and 'natural disposition' in any work of art, and in poetry in the first place. Poetry is an art and as such, it is the result of elaborateness and labour; that is, artifice on the part of its author. In addition, it is affected by

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1. Ibn Raʃi:q: Ibid., p. 131, translated by V. Cantarino: op.cit., p. 61.

2. Imru?u-l-Qays (another famous author of one of the pre-Islamic Odes) is said to have mastered metaphor and simile; see Ibn Raʃi:q: ibid., Vol. I, p. 94. This poet's masterpiece is full of rhetorical devices such as alliteration, antithesis, parallelism, etc. In Mufaḍḍaliyya:t, the famous anthology of pre-Islamic poetry there are two poems by ɛabdulla:h Ibn Salama-l-ɣa:midi: (poems 18 and 19, pp. 102-107) which exhibit a large use of pun or alliteration (Jina:s). This might prove that the idea that pre-Islamic poetry is devoid of artifice is wrong. See: ʃawqi: Ḍayf: "al-Fann wa maḍa: hibuh...", pp. 13-40.

inherited factors inherent in the very norms and conventions it represents. One can easily feel the presence of such elements when reading pre-Islamic odes and masterpieces, whether in their topics, in their style or in their form. Similarly with the poetry of later ages, one feels that poets have always been dealing with their 'craft' exactly like skilful learned 'craftsmen' who know their work and are deeply aware of the norms and conventions that need to be respected in order for them to reach fame, and for their poetry to gain easy diffusion.

Natural gift is not to be ignored, of course, but it is an element which is quickly affected by the practice of poetry through experience and thorough consideration of certain norms and inherited concepts and techniques. This is indeed the case in any art and there can be no doubt that, in the eyes of the Arabs, the poet is an artist and his trade an art.[1] The widespread idea amongst them that poetry is a 'craft' (ṣina:ɛa)[2] comes in accordance with the view of the Ancient Greeks and Western scholars that poetry is a type of art with a close kinship to drawing, sculpture, dance and music.

In these respects, the traditional idea of 'natural poetry' being the product of 'natural disposition',

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1. Very often, references were made to wood-carving and silverwork and the like, as types of art from which comparisons to poetry could be drawn. See for instance: Quda:ma Ibn Jaɛfar (died ≈ 922 or 958 A.D.): "Naqdu-ʃ-ʃiɛr", p.3.

2. See Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, p. 198.

and meaning the type of poetry where there is neither artifice nor adornment, is to be rejected; and consequently, the division of poets on this basis is also to be disregarded, since the Arab critics themselves seem to have recognized the presence of artificiality even in the poetry of earlier ages and, accordingly, distinguished between the poets only on the basis of the degree of artificiality exhibited in their works.[1] In this way, they neglected the manner by which such a feature is put into practice, as well as the historical and cultural background which led to the increasing interest in adornment in C.A. poetry as from the IXth century A.D.

It would be much more useful and conform to the reality of art to consider another criterion to differentiate between the works of different poets and understand the elements which made of a poet's work a work of art. That is, by considering how linguistic devices are adapted in his work to the requirements of artistic expression (i.e. linguistic foregrounding).

The grammatical aspects of this process have been discussed in the previous chapter, in relation to A.T.'s poetry, and the feature of parallelism. More important in his work, and to the extent that they emphasize the close kinship between poetry and music, are the various

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1. This, as expected, led them to note the higher recurrence of rhetorical devices (i.e. artifice) in the works of poets like A.T. and others of his age, thus bringing them to qualify his poetry as 'affected' and 'unnatural', in comparison to the 'natural' and 'easy-flowing' poetry of earlier ages.

aspects of phonological parallelism which will be the object of our discussion in this chapter.

I. The Meaning of Phonological Parallelism

By phonological parallelism is meant any instance of poetry where a repetitive sound-pattern is used in the context and which, in other types of discourse, would be fortuitous and of no communicative value at all. It has been mentioned earlier, when introducing the concept of parallelism [see Chap. II, p.p.92-107]. that obtrusive regularities (and irregularities, deviations) account for most of what is characteristic of poetic language. It has also been mentioned that such regularities are of primary importance when occurring at the level of 'expression', that is, in the phonological and surface grammatical structure. With regard to the main object of our concern here (i.e. phonology), one should note that phonology is hardly an area of deviation in C.A. poetry, but rather an area of linguistic patterning whereby foregrounded parallelism is prominent; parallelism, not in the abstract sense of repetition or recurrence of structure, "but in the more direct sense of actual physical, acoustic repetition: in a word, the ECHOIC aspect of literary language".[1]

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1. G.N. Leech: "A linguistic guide to English poetry", p. 73.

In the preceding chapter, a particular feature was emphasized in relation to parallelism: that is, the great amount of interdependence between the different linguistic layers. Thus, with regard to syntactic parallelism in A.T.'s poetry, it was mentioned that the degree of patterning on one linguistic layer is the more important and stylistically significant when reinforced by similar cases of patterning on the other layers. Particular remarks were made about instances of syntactic parallelism involving repetitions of lexical items and extending to phonological correspondences between the words involved in the text [See chap. III, p.p.136-9] . Some more remarks still need to be made:

a) Maximum cases of syntactic parallelism operating on different layers of structure and covering most syntactically formal elements often result in some words corresponding in their morphological formation, since Arabic grammar leans heavily on morphological variations for marking syntactic relations. Hence the opposition in the class of nouns, for instance, between the structure [Ca:CiC] (e.g. ka:tib, i.e. author, writer) and [ma-CCu:C] (e.g. maktu:b, i.e. something written, a book, a letter, etc.) to mark the opposition of syntactic relations between 'agent' and 'patient'.

b) Morphological correspondence entails a phonological one since morphological variations in Arabic are in many cases marked by specific phonological structures. Thus, word-formation in C.A. starts from a group of three consonantal radicals generally, containing the basic

general meaning, to which vowels are added, giving each word thereby its particular nuance of the basic general meaning.[1] In what follows, we have some examples of Arabic morpho-phonological oppositions:

- one way action / reciprocity

(-a-a- (e.g. katab = to write);
(vs.
(-a:-a- (e.g. ka:tab = to write to each other, to correspond);

- singular / plural

(-i-a:- (e.g. kita:b = a book);
(vs.
(-u-u- (e.g. kutub = books);

- active / passive

(-a-a- (e.g. katab = to write);
(vs.
(-u-i- (e.g. kutib = to be written);

etc. etc. etc.

c) Finally, lexical repetition presupposes a phonological one, and one can merely reflect, as Leech says, "that to repeat a word is to repeat the sounds of which it is composed."[2]

The preceding remarks clearly show the degree of interdependence between the different linguistic layers, a feature which may well be used by the poet to become, in the framework of foregrounded parallelism, a rich resource

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1. For more details on Arabic word-formation see: H. Fleisch: "L'Arabe Classique: Esquisse d'une structure linguistique", pp. 21-126: "Sur la Morphologie de l'Arabe Classique"; see also: W. Wright: "A Grammar of the Arabic Language", Vol. I.

2. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 75.

for various stylistic devices. It should be recalled, however, that not all phonological schemes occur within syntactically parallel structures.

It will be our purpose in this chapter to analyse the phonological schemes most characteristic of A.T.'s poetry, in order to show the way they usually interplay and overlap to contribute to the general 'euphony' or 'musicality' of the poetic sound structure. An attempt will be made towards analysing the classical rhetorical devices based on the feature of sound repetitions within the context of foregrounding and phonological parallelism. Further reference will be made later to some of the ways in which types of phonological schemes may occasionally be related to meaning, that is, how the sound characteristics of a certain piece of poetry may support and reflect some aspects of the textually described situation. This is justified by our assumption that the poetic choice, whatever the level in which it may occur, presupposes some motivation on the part of the poet, and definitely assumes a specific function within the whole structure of the poem: this will be part of the interpretation stage of phonological schemes in A.T.'s poetry. But let us first see how the Arab rhetoricians and literary critics studied those schemes and understood their role in poetry.

II. The Arab Rhetoricians and Phonological Schemes in A.T.'s Poetry

In the general introduction to the present study [see Chap. I], the pattern of development of Arabic interest

in the study of poetry was set out. It was shown how such a pattern has determined the approach that the Arab scholars have adopted and led their studies of poetry to be in general more casuistic and critical than aesthetic, more pragmatic than theoretical, more rhetorical and prosodic than strictly poetic. The exegetical and practical linguistic uses which determined their approach to poetry are to a great extent the factors behind this attitude. Not less important in determining this attitude is also the generally obvious formalism of their concept of poetry as the form of speech which contains the highest degree of linguistic complexity and, consequently, of artistic perfection, in comparison with all other forms of speech. V. Cantarino quotes a very famous statement by al-Marra:kuʃi: in the XIVth century A.D., reported a century later by the renowned encyclopedist as-Suyu:ṭi:, on the genesis of human speech. In this genesis, poetry occupies the highest rank in ascending order from the simplest degree of speech composition to the most complex, hence, most perfect, and this because of its greater formal complexity (sounds, words, sentences, rhyme, metre). [1] Compared with prose, for instance, poetry possesses the highest merits of eloquence; Al-Mubarrid (died in 898 A.D.) clearly emphasizes it in his fashionable "Epistle on Poetry and Prose"; he says:

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1. As-Suyu:ṭi: "al-ʔitqa:n fi: ɛulu:mi- l-qurʔa:n", (Cairo, 1951), Vol. II, p. 120; see V. Cantarino: op.cit., pp. 41-42, and G. von Grunebaum: "The Aesthetic Foundation of Arabic Literature", in Per. "Comparative Literature",IV , 1952, p. 327.

> "the essence of eloquence consists in a complete rendering of the concept, a proper selection of the spoken expression, and a beautiful composition ... All these being equal in prose speech and the 'joint' discourse, also called poetry, neither one of these two kinds will have a greater excellence than the other. However, the one composing a 'joint' speech is more worthy of praise because he offers as much as the other and to this he adds metre and rhyme; metre namely always imposes great effort, and rhyme requires the use of great skill." 1

The amount of such a skill is to al-Jurja:ni: (died 1001 A.D.) the basic criterion in judging the work of different poets, and the domain where this skill is to operate is the form, the 'wording' (lafḍ); he says:

> "If you want to know the place occupied in the heart by an elegant expression [lafḍ] and its powerful possibilities in making poetry beautiful, examine the poetry by Jari:r and Du-l-Rumma among the ancient poets, or al-Buḥturi: among the modern, and trace the lyrical introduction [nasi:b] of Arab lovers and composers of love poems from ḥija:z, such as ɛumar, Kuṯayr, Jami:l, Nuṣayb and others. Inquire who among them is the most excellent in his poetry and most excellent in wording and formulation. Then, look and decide in justice and stop saying: did he improve this ...? or: did he say any more than so and so? Indeed, the splendour of wording is the first thing that brings you to the decision and you only reach the concept when examining and studying it." 2

Accordingly, the interest of the Arab critics and rhetoricians seems to have been concentrated on the poetic quality which is based mainly upon the adornment

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1. G. Von Grunebaum: "al-Mubarrid's Epistle on Poetry and Prose" in "Orientalia", Vol. X, 1941, p. 374. The whole epistle is translated in V. Cantarino: op.cit., pp. 103-108 and the passage quoted is in p. 104.

2. al-Jurja:ni: "al-Wasa:ṭah", p. 27, translated by V. Cantarino: op.cit., p. 48; the underlining at the end of the quotation is mine.

and lay-out of the poetic concepts. This is, in fact, the domain of rhetoric, and more particularly, that of al-Badi:ε (the "New Style"), where its study comes under the part dealing with "figures of speech" (muħassina:t lafḍiyyah) or, as we chose to call them earlier, 'schemes'.

A.T.'s poetry provided the Arabs with a rich variety of schemes based on systematic recurrences of sound patterns, and those were studied under the following major headings:

1. Alliteration (Jina:s or Tajni:s): a device in which A.T. is a specialist. Basically, it depends upon a similarity of sound and disparity of meaning. It may consist of a pure balancing of 'homonyms', as in the following controversial line from one of his poems [Vol. II, p. 85, l. 18]:

> laya:liyana: bi-r-raqqatayni wa ʔahliha:
> saqa-l-εahda minki-l-εahdu wa-l-εahdu wa-l-εahdu
> (Oh you, our nights at Raqqatayn in the company of its people, may your days be watered with loyalty, [standing] promises, and [enriching] rains),

where four different meanings share the single form or sound structure of the word εahd.[1] This is what some

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1. The first εahd means either a "place", "surroundings", or "the past days". The remaining three "εahd" may be interpreted in different ways, the easiest and most direct of which is to take all of them as meaning only one thing: "rain"; the 2nd hemistich in this case will be translated as follows: (... may your days [or surroundings] be watered with rain and rain and rain, i.e. may you never remain short of rain). But if one recalls A.T.'s great linguistic background, his predilection for

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rhetoricians call jina:s muma:tal, whose basis is muma:talah (or tama:tul, i.e. full identity), or ʔiʃtira:k (i.e. homonymy).

Jina:s may also be a repetition of a word with the addition of suffixes,[1] of prefixes,[2] or with the transposition (qalb), whether partial or total, of the word's

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Footnote 1 continued from previous page.

complexity, for subtle imagery and verbal acrobatics one would interpret the line differently, and ɛahd would be related each time to a different meaning. The choice of which meaning is intended by the poet in every case depends on the reader's interpretation, and the way I translated it shows my own interpretation of the line. It seems obvious that A.T. has picked up the word ɛahd deliberately, knowing its ambiguity and aware of the striking effect it will produce when used in this manner, and he did succeed in doing so. See the long comments which show this point of the controversy in A.T.'s poetry, Vol. II, pp. 85-86 and in f.n. 2, pp. 86-87. See also Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 322-323.

1. In this case, the jina:s is said to be "muṭarraf" (i.e. addition at the ṭaraf, the end, the extremity) or mudayyal (i.e. addition with appendix, suffix), according to whether the suffixed addition is of only one consonant (e.g. qawa:ḍin / qawa:ḍib, i.e. deadly / sharp; muwa:rin / muwa:rib, i.e. secretive / equivocal) or of more than one consonant (nawa: / nawa:ʔib, i.e. travel / diversities of time; ṣafa: / ṣafa:ʔiḥ, i.e. a hard rock / blades), respectively. It is clear from the examples given that the distinction completely ignores the role played by the vowels (not represented in written Arabic) and thus, that of the syllables. Hence the confusion between "addition" and "substitution" in the case of jina:s muṭarraf (e.g. qawa:ḍin / qawa:ḍib), where there is no addition but rather a substitution of the /n/ of case-ending for a /b/, while the syllabic structure remains unchanged. Reference to spelling and to the written form is obviously behind such considerations.

2. This is a sub-category of jina:s called jina:s na:qiṣ (i.e. incomplete) which also groups the two categories considered in f.n. 1 above. It consists of a balance between two words exactly similar in their sounds but with the difference that one of them has a prefix more than the other (e.g. sa:q / ʾma-sa:qʾ, i.e. a leg / the trend of things, their course).

constituent sounds.[1] Additional divisions were made by successive generations of rhetoricians, with an excessive ingenuity that brought this device into complete disrepute.

2. 'Fronting' (taṣdi:r: lit. to bring sth. forward, to the front: ṣadr): It consists of the repetition, in the first half of a verse, of one or more words (itself or in one of its forms) occurring in the second half of that verse. This is clearly illustrated in the following two lines from one of A.T.'s erotic introductions [Vol. II, p. 309, l. 2-3]:

1. ʔaɛraḍat burhatan fa-lamma: ʔaħassat bi-n-nawa: ʔaɛraḍat ɛani-l-ʔiɛra:ḍi ;
2. γaṣabatha: naħi:baha: ɛazama:tun γaṣabatni: taṣabburi: wa-γtimaḍi: .
1. (She showed herself to me for a while, but when she felt [the approach of] separation, she [quickly] disappeared;
2. Her wailing was forced out of her by a determination [to leave] which forced forbearance and sleep away from me);

as can be noticed in line 1, the same verb ʔaɛraḍa (i.e. "to show oneself", and also "to discard") is repeated three times/as a verbal noun which occurs in the rhyme (ʔiɛra:ḍ, twice as a verb, and the third time in this context, the act of showing oneself). In their

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1. This is a sub-category of jina:s called "jina:s qalb" (i.e. alliteration by transposition), itself divided into four types, according to whether the transposition is total, so that the words concerned have their sounds in an opposite order to each other (e.g. ħatf / fatħ, i.e. death / conquest) - note again the influence of spelling and the written form - , or partial (e.g. bard / badr, i.e. cold / the moon; ṣafa:ʔiħ / ṣaħa:ʔif, i.e. blades, swords / books, pages, etc.).

various definitions of the taṣdi:r device, the Arab rhetoricians regard the verb ʔaʕraḍa beginning this line as the reiteration 'brought forward', to 'the front', of the same lexical item which occurs in two different forms in the second hemistich. This is similarly the case with the verb ɣaṣaba used twice in line 2 (i.e. to force sth. out of, away from): it is the first ɣaṣaba which is regarded as the repetition of the second one, and not the opposite. Such a view by the Arab rhetoricians is justified by another one related to the rhyme-word. In fact, taṣdi:r was originally closely related to rhyme. According to the Arabs, "the best verses of poetry are those whose rhyme-word can be known as soon as the beginning has been heard".[1] Ibn Qutayba writes: "the gifted poet is he ... who reveals, in the beginning of a verse, its rhyme-word".[2] Thus, the rhyme-word has to be predicted from the very start of the line, and A. Trabulsi reminds us of the quite popular pastime hobby consisting of leaving to others the prediction of the rhyme-word in every verse after having recited its beginning to them.[3] This is not an easy task, however, and it requires the practice of certain skills and the use of some devices by the poet. Taṣdi:r is one of those, and originally, it consisted of

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1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 32.
2. Ibn Qutayba: op.cit., Vol. I, p. 90.
3. A. Trabulsi: op.cit., p. 183. This hobby is known under the name of "ʔija:zah".

announcing explicitly the rhyme-word in the beginning of the line. Ibn Raʃi:q, for instance, defines it as follows: "It [i.e. taṣdi:r] is to bring to the front the ends of a discourse".[1] With regard to poetry, this consists of indicating from the beginning of the verse the word that comes at its rhyme. It is on the other hand this particular feature which Ibn Raʃi:q meant when he said of A.T., showing his special predilection for the taṣdi:r device: "A.T. used to fix [in advance] the rhyme-word of a verse, in order to tie its two hemistichs [together]".[2] In other words, the Arabs assert that in order to have a 'stable' rhyme-word (mutamakkin as opposed to "unsettled" or qaliq) - another requirement for a refined poetic skill[3] - the poet needs so to speak to build all the verse on it (i.e. on the rhyme-word), and this is exactly what taṣdi:r consists of. This has been extended afterwards to any reiteration, in a line of poetry, of a word or any of its derivates (e.g. lines 1 and 2 above, p.185). On the surface phonological level, taṣdi:r (in any of its

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1. Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. II, p. 3; see particularly the series of examples he gives to illustrate this device. They all show the exact correspondence between the rhyme-word and another one - at least - occurring in the line.

2. Ibn Raʃi:q: Ibid., Vol. I, p. 209.

3. Ibn Raʃi:q (Ibid., Vol. I, p. 216) reports a statement by Ibn Sami:n summing up the main points of Arabic theory concerning the beginning and ending of the single verse: "the maqa:ṭiɛ are the ends of the verses; the maṭa:liɛ are their beginnings ... what they [i.e. the critics] mean when they say: [the poem has] 'beautiful endings', or 'beautiful beginnings', is that the end of the verse, i.e. the rhyme-syllable, is 'stable' [mutamakkin] not 'unsettled' [qaliq], and that it is not dependent upon another [verse]; that is its beauty. The beauty of the maṭlaɛ, i.e. the beginning of the verse, consists in its indicating what comes after it, as in the case of taṣdi:r and the like"; translated and also quoted by R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 21.

forms) relies like jina:s on a systematic repetition of a certain sound pattern, and also like jina:s, it was subject to a great amount of classifications and sub-classifications.

3. 'Balancing' (Muwa:zanah): The third type of phonological schemes recognized in A.T.'s poetry by the Arabs is the so-called device of muwa:zanah. Ibn al-ʔaṯi:r defines it as "the balance in their morpho-phonological structure [wazn] between the words of the first and second hemistichs of a poetic line".[1]

The examples which he gave clearly show that it consists of perfect cases of syntactic parallelism reinforced by a strong morpho-phonological correspondence between the constituents of the parallel members. Thus, in the following line from one of A.T.'s erotic pieces [Vol. III, p. 116, l. 9]:

maha-l-waḥ∫i ʔilla: ʔanna ha:ta: ʔawa:nisun,
qana-l-xaṭṭi ʔilla: ʔanna tilka ḏawa:bilu: .

([Those ladies are as beautiful in their eyes as] wild antelopes / except that these [i.e. the ladies] are sociable, [and their shape is comparable to] the spears of al-xaṭṭ except that those are withered),

we have an exact morpho-phonological correspondence (in addition to syntactic parallelism) between the following pairs:

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1. Ibn al-ʔaṯi:r (d. 1239 A.D.): "al-Maṯalu-s-sa:ʔir", Vol. I, p. 278.

- maha-l-waħʃi (i.e. wild antelopes /) - ʔawa:nisu (i.e. sociable)
  cv-cvc-cvc-cv cv-cvv-cv-cv
- qana-l-xaṭṭi (i.e. spears of al-xatt) - dawa:bilu (i.e. withered)

We also have an exact repetition of the conjunctions ʔilla: ʔanna (i.e. except that) in the two hemistichs and in the same position within the syntactic pattern, which implies an additional phonological patterning. On the other hand, there is no such correspondence between the remaining two demonstratives ha:ta: (i.e. these) and tilka (i.e. those) apart from their position in the pattern, their identical syntactic function and the number of their syllables (both are disyllabic words).

When "muwa:zanah" is reinforced by internal rhyme, that is, when the parallel members rhyme with each other, the Arabs speak of tarṣi:ɛ (lit. the lay-out of gems).[1] This device is well-illustrated by the following line [Vol. II, p. 66, l. 23]:

> tajalla: bihi ruʃdi: , wa ʔatrat bihi yadi: ,
> wa fa:da bihi tamdi: , wa ʔawra: bihi zandi: .
> (Thanks to him, my good sense became evident,
> my hand rich, my well flowing, and my fire-steel
> [capable of] kindling [i.e. this is a symbol for
> success]),

where four syntactically parallel sentences have their subjects rhyming together (ruʃdi:, yadi:, tamdi:, zandi:), while

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1. See Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 26-31, where he brings a good amount of illustrations from Arabic poetry in different ages.

three of those nouns (except yadi:) share the same phonological structure (cvc-cvv).

Further examples of this device will be given from A.T.'s poetry, when we come to the revision of all those schemes in the light of phonological parallelism [see the following section].

The above was a short survey of the main phonological schemes in A.T.'s poetry as they were generally considered by the Arab rhetoricians. In such a survey the endeavour was to simplify their definitions as much as possible, and remove a considerable amount of confusing details and terminology due to their effort to identify every conceivable technique of poetic expression and classify it into ever smaller sub-categories. Their minute description of those devices could easily have led them to discuss the ways in which these elements can be most effectively combined within the verse; but it has not. Obviously, as noted earlier, their pragmatic approach to poetry and its techniques is behind such an attitude, an attitude purely concentrated on the form. Yet, despite their preoccupation with the study of form, as R.P. Scheindlin notes:

> "they seem to have given hardly any attention at all to the function in the poem of the formal elements of poetry which they analyzed in such minute detail. Intent on defining and giving examples of the rhetorical figures, they neglect to explain how these figures are related to the poem or to the verse in which they occur. Never do the critics discuss the techniques employed by the poets to ensure that the verses of a poem combine harmoniously, nor do they try to explain how the rhetorical devices may be used to create a poem of recognisable structure." 1

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1. R.P. Scheindlin: op.cit., p. 8.

Their interest has been further concentrated on the evaluation of rhetorical schemes as used by the poets, praising the successful and condemning those which lead to a deplorable cacophony due to affectation and elaborateness. A.T. particularly has been subject to strong attacks from his critics because he made rhetoric the chief instrument of his poetry (especially the jina:s scheme).[1] One has to admit that much of this criticism is just. We need only consider this line quoted by most of his critics [Vol. III, p. 169, l. 12]:

> qarrat bi-qurra:na ɛaynu-d-di:ni wa-nʃatarat bi-l-ʔaʃtarayni ɛuyu:nu-ʃ-ʃirki fa-stulima:
> (At Qurra:n, the eye of Faith [i.e. Islam] was soothed, while at Aʃtarayn, the eyes of infidelity became diseased [lit. afflicted with inversion of the margins of the eyelids] so that it was uprooted);

as A. Hamori notes, in agreement with all the Arab critics, "this is admittedly too clever by half. The metaphor [i.e. the eye of Faith, the eyes of infidelity] is too shallow to sustain the cleverness, and the verse is crippled".[2]

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1. See for instance Al-ʔa:midi: op.cit., Vol.I , pp.265-71, where there is a special section dealing with "cases of displeasing jina:s in the poetry of A.T."; see also Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., , Vol. I, pp. 129-134, 209, 323-329; and also "al-Jurja:ni:" (ɛabdu-l-qa:hir): "ʔasra:ru-l-bala:-ɣah", Vol. I, pp. 99-111; etc.

2. A. Hamori: op.cit., p. 126.

The first poem in his Diwan [Vol. I, pp. 7-19] exhibits a similar way of using rhetorical schemes; in every line, the poet persistently brings together a name of a place and a word related to it in sounds. Thus, in line 3 of this poem, he derives the verb tabaṭṭaħa (i.e. to be laid low) from Baṭħa:ʔ (i.e. one of Mecca's names); and with Minan, in line 4 (the valley of Mina, near Mecca), he uses the noun Munan (i.e. wishes), and so on from one line to another with other names of places, ɛarafa:t (the sacred mountain East of Mecca), Kada:ʔ (a mountain on the border of Mecca), Ṭaybah (one of Medina's names), etc., etc. To the critics, this is mere verbal acrobatics and word-play which does not serve for any poetic purpose. This may be well justified if one analyses alliteration as used by A.T. in this line from one of his erotic introductions [Vol. II, p. 118, l. 2]:

> li salma: sala:ma:nin, wa ɛamrati ɛa:mirin
> wa Hindi Bani: Hindin, wa suɛda: Bani: saɛdi
> ([...] to Salma: of Sala:ma:n, and ɛamrah of ɛa:mir, and Hind of Banu:Hind, and Suɛda: of Banu: Saɛd),

or in this line, where he is describing a horse [Vol. II, p. 410, l. 8]:

> bi-ħawa:firin ħufrin, wa ṣulbin ṣullabin,
> wa ʔaʃa:ɛirin ʃuɛrin, wa xalqin ʔaxlaqi.
> ([...] with digging hooves [i.e. denoting their hardness], a robust build, hairy legs [i.e. denoting their beauty] and a sleek body).

In the first line, four names of ladies (Salma:, ɛamrah,

Hind and Sueda:) occur with four names of tribes in four alliterating pairs of words. In the second one, we have a mere succession of four qualified nouns followed, in each case, by an epithet; nouns and epithets are also in pairs of alliterating words.

With verses of this kind, the Arab critics would justifiably ask: what concepts can the listener reach by this type of jina:s ? What may be the poetic experience conveyed by these lines? Obviously, they assert, there is none, since the poet's interest, at the moment of poetic creation, is not on expressing a definite idea but mainly on decoration and adornment. Seeking the latter, they claim, can be only at the expense of meaning; hence the 'futility' of the preceding two lines and others like them. Jina:s of this kind is pointless because it does not serve the idea, and should consequently be condemned.

To that extent, the Arab critics' call for the poets to use phonological schemes sparingly is quite justified. But they failed to consider the 'expressive function' and the 'musical value' which well applied phonological schemes might have in poetry. They seem, on the contrary, to have only considered the repetition for its own sake of sound patterns, a fact which led those patterns to remain as mere verbal decoration. A. Trabulsi rightly points out that: "Ce qu'on est accoutumé à appeler aujourd'hui 'harmonie imitative' est une idée fort nouvelle";[1]

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1. A. Trabulsi: op.cit., p. 160.

but he also notes - justifiably - that:

> "Les critiques Arabes ne semblent s'être intéressés qu'à la répétition, pour elle-même, de syllabes ou de groupes de syllabes. La répétition des lettres seules ne constituait pas à leurs yeux une allitération. C'est, peut-être, la raison pour laquelle ils ne purent pas expliquer la beauté d'un grand nombre de vers , anciens et modernes, qu'ils admirent sans savoir précisément pourquoi." 1

My attempt in the next section will be to review some of those phonological schemes in A.T.'s poetry, in order to show how they operate, overlap and participate in creating cohesion, harmony and beauty within a piece of poetry.

III. Musicality and Phonological Schemes in A.T.'s Poetry

1. Is metre the only element that relates poetry to music?

The relationship between poetry and fine art, and particularly music, is a question that is no longer raised nowadays, since it is generally agreed that these various activities do draw inspiration from each other; thus, literature - and especially poetry - can become an effective source of inspiration to other arts, or intimately collaborate with them sometimes in creating works of unquestionable value. Likewise, works of art may become the themes of poetry, and the latter may similarly attempt to borrow and achieve the effects of other arts.

The relationship between poetry and music in

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1. A. Trabulsi: op.cit., p. 160.

particular has been the subject of a great amount of discussion on the part of critics and modern literary scholars. The Arab critics themselves took an interest in this question but dealt with it only in connection with metre. Obviously, metre is the most definite component of the poetic structure that relates it directly to music by means of syllabic and rhythmic parallelism [see next chapter]. A verse of poetry, from this point of view, may be regarded as a component of meaningful words which combine together in order to create a certain rhythmic - thus, musical - effect which is repeated and 'echoed' in consecutive verses, and changes from one poem to another according to the type and arrangement of its constituent syllables. The Arab critics recognized such a feature; they also recognized its possible occurrence in non-poetic discourse, such as in the Koran, in prose, or even in everyday speech. They themselves practised the scanning of Koranic verses which sometimes exhibit a perfect rhythmic parallelism identical with the one found in the metres of poetry. This rhythmic parallelism, in other cases, may even be accompanied with rhyme, the other distinctive feature in C.A. poetry (as in rhyming prose, or saǰε). This is however not enough to consider as poetry such a kind of discourse. In this connection, al-Ba:qilla:ni: (d. 1013 A.D.) says:

> "If it were right to call [poet] everyone who in his speech happens by chance to use words that sound like a poetic rhythm or are arranged with one of the prosodic metres, everybody would be a poet; for there is no speaker who, in the whole amount of what he says, does not use by chance something that has [the]

rhythmic and [metric] arrangement of poetry."[1] It is in relation to this matter that one may explain the introduction by Ibn Raʃi:q of the concept of "poetic intent" (an-Niyyah,[2] i.e. the 'intent' on the part of the speaker to compose poetry), as one important element in the definition of poetry (in addition to metre, rhyme, wording and concept) which helps to differentiate it from any fortuitous use of metrical rhythm.

Thus, it has been only on the metre and on the final metrical structure of their verse that the Arabs concentrated their interest. They seem to have felt the existence of some other features which may relate poetry to music, but could not distinguish the formal elements which are the basis of those musical effects.

A piece of poetry does not generally convey its musical effects merely by the total rhythm inherent in its metre. On the contrary, one must also consider the phonic quality of each word used in the verse (its constituent sounds, the number and types of its syllables, their arrangement, etc.). In addition, there is the combination of the words together, their succession into different syntactic patterns, and the total 'euphonic' (i.e. musical) characteristics which emerge from this combination in one verse, first of all, then in a section or in the total piece of poetry. As W.I. Saif puts it, metre

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1. al-Ba:qilla:ni: "ʔiʕja:zu-l-Qurʔa:n", Vol. I, p. 81; the translation is by V. Cantarino: op.cit., p. 45.

2. Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 119-120.

is hardly an independent component in the poetic structure, and it can only account for part of the total musicality of a poetic text. Because of that,

> "it is very likely to be conditioned by and interrelated with other formal characteristics in a certain poem. Metre itself ... allows for many intrasystematic variations with the same general pattern, and such institutionalized variations account for part of the fact that poems based on the same general metre may produce different rhythmic, thus musical, effects." 1

A comparison between the formal characteristics of the following two lines, from two different poems of A.T.'s, would suffice to support the preceding statement. In the first one, A.T. addresses the traditional rebuker, a lady who seems to have exasperated him with reprobation [Vol. I, p. 150, l. 12]:

1. ʔa-ħa:walti ʔirʃa:di: fa-ɛaqliya murʃidi: ,
   ʔam-istamti taʔdi:bi: fa-dahri: muʔaddibi: .
   (Are you trying to advise me? [I do not need it], for my reason is my adviser, or [perhaps] you meant to teach me? [I do not need it either], for my destiny will be my teacher).

In the second line, from another poem, he addresses the same rebuker, also a lady, in an apparently different tone [Vol. I, p. 219, l. 4]:

2. dari:ni: wa ʔahwa:la-z-zama:ni ʔufa:niha: ,
   fa-ʔahwa:luhu-l-ɛuḍma: tali:ha: raɣa:ʔibuh .
   (Leave me [alone] struggling with the hardship of [my] destiny, for [this] great hardship will [soon] be followed by success).

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1. W.I. Saif: op.cit., p. 170.

The two lines have broadly the same theme; they also have the same metrical structure: both are in the Ṭawi:l metre [see next chapter for more details on Arabic metres]. Yet they differ completely in their total musical effect.

In the first one, the poet seems to be exasperated with his rebuker, as noted earlier. This feeling is conveyed, on the syntactic level, by four simple sentences, two in each half. The first two sentences of each half are two parallel interrogative sentences, of the verbal type, containing two words each:

ʔa-ħa:walti ʔirʃa:di: ? (i.e. are you trying to advise me?)

ʔam-istamti taʔdi:bi: ? (i.e. or do you mean to teach me?)

Each interrogative sentence is immediately followed, in the same half, by its answer, this time in the form of a nominal sentence, with two words (subject + predicate), and a coordinating conjunction fa in each case:

... fa-ɛaqliya murʃidi: (i.e. my reason is my adviser)

... fa-dahri: muʔaddibi: (i.e. my destiny will be my teacher).

Both, questions and answers, are balanced against each other. The choice of a nominal structure for the answers is, I believe, interesting and stylistically valuable: a verbal style generally allows more diversity and, consequently, needs the poet to choose and exploit the genius of his language. In this situation, A.T. is not interested in drifting into verbal style; he is rather more concerned

with what he wants to say than with how to say it: a nominal sentence is the best to serve for this purpose. In addition, nominal style seems to be contrary to conversational style[1] (best conveyed by verbal structures), and the poet, in this situation, wants for anything but the discussion between him and his rebuker to be protracted. A short, absolute, two-word nominal sentence seems to be well-suited for this end. The short length of the four sentences, on the other hand, and the succession in each half of the 'question-answer pattern', make them more vivid and comprehensible than if they were longer or differently arranged.

Phonologically, a scheme of sound-reiteration (taṣdi:r), based upon morphological derivation, occurs twice in the line and puts together two pairs of lexical items (ʔirʃa:d / murʃid, taʔdi:b / muʔaddib). This feature reinforces our assumption that the poet is more concerned with what he wants to say than with choosing his words. This fact leads him not only to repeat himself in the two hemistichs (by saying more or less the same thing, which implies an emphasis on the idea), but also to resort to the same lexical item (in two different forms) in each one of them.

At the syllabic level, every hemistich contains 14 syllables, distributed as follows:

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1. See R. Wells: "Nominal and Verbal Style", in T. Sebeok (ed.), "Style in Language", pp. 217-218.

- Short syllables: cv's	6	(in	1st	half)	+	5	(in	2nd	half)
- Medium open syllables: cvv's	4	"	"	"	+	4	"	"	"
- Medium closed syllables: cvc's	4	"	"	"	+	5	"	"	"
Total	14	"	"	"	+14		"	"	"

This table shows the presence of an important feature: the smaller amount of long vowels (thus, of cvv syllables) in each half as compared to short vowels (thus of cv's and cvc's). This feature, in fact, accounts for the 'quick pace'[1] of the utterance in every hemistich, and reflects to a great extent the poet's feeling at the moment of poetic creation.

The syntactic structure of each hemistich, as explained above, is perfectly reinforced by metrical division: in each half, we find a question and an answer grammatically and metrically balanced against each other. Significantly enough, each one of them exhibits a syntactic pause (at the question mark) which falls in the middle of the metrical structure, just at the end of the second unit of the metre, thus cutting it into two equal parts. Given that the Ṭawi:l metre is a component of two different units arranged as follows:

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1. Note that the duration of speech sounds, as a phonological feature, is longer with long vowels (thus, with cvv's) than with their short counterparts. A succession of cvv syllables in a line of poetry gives it a certain slowness; while the greater occurrence of short vowels (thus of cv's and cvc's) endows it with a quicker pace. This has certainly its effect on the musical structure of the verse.

faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun faɛu:lun mafa:ɛilun

(in every hemistich), the two hemistichs may be scanned as follows:

I. question: (a verbal sentence)

ʔaña:-wal-ti ʔirʃa:di:	ʔami-stam-ti taʔdi:bi:
faɛu: lun mafa:ɛi:lun	faɛu:lun ma fa:ɛi:lun

II. answer: (a nominal sentence)

fa-ɛaqli-ya murʃidi:	fa-dahri: muʔaddibi:
faɛu:lu mafa:ɛilun	faɛu:lun mafa:ɛilun
the 1st hemistich	the 2nd hemistich

The preceding scansion, it is hoped, shows clearly how the grammatical balance between the components of every hemistich is reinforced by another one at the metrical level. These formal characteristics contribute altogether to the expression of the poet's feeling of exasperation at the rebuker's attitude at the moment of poetic creation.

This line is to be compared with the second one, on the same theme and in the same metre, but, I believe, with a completely different tone, despite the imperative by which it begins:

dari:ni: wa ʔahwa:la-z-zama:ni ʔufa:niha: ,
fa-ʔahwa:luhu-l-ɛudma: tali:ha: raɣa:ʔibuh .

(Leave me [alone] struggling with the hardship of [my] destiny, for [this] great hardship will [soon] be followed by success).

Syntactically, there is nothing in this line like the formal characteristics of the preceding one. In this case, we are dealing not with four short, two-word sentences, but only with two sentences expanding each in one

half. The first one is a compound sentence, with two verbs, having each one its actor and object in the form of pronouns:

dar-i:	-ni:		ʔu-fa:-ni-ha:		
V	Actor	Obj.	Actor	V	Obj.

Lit. Let - you (fem.) - me / Lit. I - struggle with - them (plur. fem.)

The second sentence is a nominal one, and its subject (ʔahwa:l, which 'echoes' the same word occurring in the first half: ʔahwa:l = lit. hardships) is followed by a predicative verbal sentence (tali:ha: raɣa:ʔibuh, lit. they will be followed by success). We are here far from the short length and absolute tone of the preceding line.

Even the taṣdi:r scheme, common to both lines, and involving here the word ʔahwa:l (lit. hardships), seems to hold a different function. In this line, lexical - thus, phonological - reiteration is not due to a 'lack of inspiration' on the part of the poet, or to his impatience towards the rebuker, as has been noticed with the previous line, but rather to his wish to emphasize the meaning of ʔahwa:l and put stress on its importance within the line. Using the word in the plural, and adding to it an adjective in the second hemistich (having the feminine form of the 'dative' or the 'absolute superlative': al-ɛuḍma:, i.e. the greatest), all these factors contribute in reinforcing this claim.

On the syllabic level, the line (also in the Ṭawi:l metre) has the same number of syllables in every hemistich as the previous one (14 syllables). But in this

case, the syllables are distributed as follows:

- CV-syllables:	6	(in	the	1st	half)	+ 5	(in	the	2nd	half)
- CVV-syllables:	6	"	"	"	"	+ 5	"	"	"	"
- CVC-syllables:	2	"	"	"	"	+ 4	"	"	"	"
Total =	14	"	"	"	"	+14	"	"	"	"

The greater number of medium open syllables (CVVs) in this line might explain how different it is in its total musical effect when compared to the first one. The larger amount of long vowels here, with its effect on the duration of each half, serves perfectly the poet's purpose in addressing his rebuker: he is not trying to 'shut her up', but is more concerned with emphasizing the great amount of hardship which he is enduring in his life, hardship which leads to a painful, long and 'slow-moving' struggle. Long vowels are very well-suited to 'enact' this idea, they give the rhythm a slow pace which reflects the dragging hardship of life.

To sum up, the formal characteristics of this line reveal a more composed poet, a poet whose feelings are well under control.

The various oppositions distinguished between these two lines, and particularly those inherent in the phonological structure, would show, I hope, how different the effect of a certain metrical pattern may be according to the other components of the poetic structure with which it interacts. This fact does not apply only to single verses but also to sections and even to the total body of a given poem. In this connection, one can say,

in agreement with W.I. Saif:

> "that the actual metrical shape of a particular poem is derived from the grammar and diction through which it is realised in that poetic event, as well as from the general abstract metre which the poet chooses to employ. The metrical skeleton has to be filled out by linguistic elements - grammatical and lexical - which have their own characteristics. Thus, the total phonic qualities of a poetic structure emerge from the mutually conditioned and interrelated choices of both metre and linguistic form (i.e. grammar and lexicon)."[1]

Metre in A.T.'s poetry will be the object of our interest in the next chapter. In what follows here, our main concern will be with the other phonological components of the poetic structure in his work: syllabication (a component directly related to metre and morphology in C.A.), recurrence of sound patterns, 'density' and distribution of certain phonemes in a particular poem, and in relation to particular schemes. All these are basic components of what constitutes the typical sound-texture of a poem, a feature which has been generally neglected by the Arab scholars, and which will be discussed here with special reference to A.T.'s poetry.

2. The major types of phonological schemes in A.T.'s poetry

The examination of A.T.'s style shows, as mentioned earlier, the presence of a large variety of phonological schemes. Common to all of them is the element of 'formal repetition', a fact which comes in accordance

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1. W.I. Saif: op.cit., p. 170.

with the above-given definition of 'schemes' as 'the foregrounded repetitions of expression' [see Chapter II, conclusion] and of 'phonological schemes' as those which are basically related to the 'echoic' aspect of literary language.

Phonological repetition in A.T.'s poetry follows various patterns which may be considered under three major types:[1]

A. Those which rely on alliteration;

B. Those which rely on internal rhyme;

C. Those which rely on a correspondence in the phonological and/or morpho-phonological structure.

It must be admitted that, although an adequate explanation of what the musicality of a piece of poetry relies upon necessitates a careful accounting for different formal characteristics of the poetic structure, these major types of phonological schemes (which are themselves instances of rhetorical devices, as we shall see later) play an important part in it.

A. Alliteration: It is the scheme which relates together a succession of words or group of words of similar or identical constituent sounds (whether consonants or vowels; we speak in the latter case of 'assonance') or syllables.

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1. I am very much indebted to W.I. Saif: op.cit., pp. 171-176, in the distinction of these major types of phonological schemes. I find it quite helpful in reconsidering those schemes (as they were studied by the Arab rhetoricians) within the framework of foregrounded parallelism, since it reduces so much of the detailed approach of the rhetoricians and shows the common ground on which the traditional 'figures of speech' are based.

These may occur involuntarily or by choice. They may be initial, medial or final. A special consideration will be concentrated on etymology and word-derivation since a great amount of alliterative schemes in A.T.'s work are based upon word-derivation and a series of different forms of a single root (e.g. ʔuns, ʔaniːs, ʔistaʔnasa, i.e. intimacy, intimate, to become intimate, respectively). The Arabs speak here of jinaːsu-l-ʔiʃtiqaːq (i.e. jinaːs by derivation); others speak just of taṣarruf or taṣriːf[1] (i.e. derivation), refusing to consider as jinaːs this kind of 'word-play', on the ground that real jinaːs is the scheme that relates two or more words derived from different roots (i.e. a similarity of sound, but disparity of meaning).

Alliteration may be total, as in the case of 'homonymy' (e.g. yaħyaː, as a proper name, and yaħyaː, as the imperfect of the verb "to live", in A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, p. 347, l. 14). The Arabs speak here of jinaːs taːmm (i.e. full or perfect jinaːs). But it may also be embodied in the succession of the same sound(s) or the same syllable(s) in consecutive words not necessarily related in their etymology. Thus Raːmah (a name of a place) and riːm (i.e. a white antelope)[A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, p. 160, l. 1] alliterate with each other without being etymologically related.[2]

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1. See al-ɛaskari: op.cit., pp. 321-322; and also Ibn Raʃiːq: op.cit., Vol. I, p. 322.

2. Raːmah seems to have been derived from the radicals /r-w-m/, and Ibn Manḍuːr (Lisaːnu-l-ɛarab, Vol. 12, p. 258) considers it with the lexical items derived from those radicals. Riːm, on the other hand, is

/continued over

As can be noticed, the present definition of alliteration is wide enough to cover all the types of jina:s and taṣdi:r [see above, sect. 2] considered by the Arabs, as well as the words in a line of poetry which are related in some or only one of their sounds. The latter case of alliteration has been generally neglected in classical rhetoric , as noted earlier.

B. Internal rhyme: The exclusively metrical function of rhyme as an important factor in signalling the conclusion of the line of poetry is a matter to be dealt with later, when we come to the study of metre with its various aspects and components in A.T.'s poetry. Here, we shall be more concerned with 'internal rhyme' as an instance of sound repetition of great importance in creating musicality in a piece of poetry, by bringing together linked up or contrasted words. In A.T.'s style, the practice of internal rhyme is not as current as it is in the works of other poets of his generation or some of their disciples.[1] He is however one of the Arab poets who practised it most.

Footnote 2 continued from previous page.

derived from the radicals /r-ʔ-m/ with a medial glottal stop. Its long medial vowel /i:/ is the result of taxfi:f (i.e. easing, lightening of weight) of what used to be a quiescent, non-vocalic glottal stop (i.e. riʔm > ri:m). See Ibn Manḍu:r: Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 259.

1. Al-Mutanabbi (lived at the Xth A.D.) and al-Maɛarri: (d. 1059 A.D.), after him, exhibit a good amount of tarṣi:ɛ (internal rhyme + muwa:zanah), taqsi:m, and the like. Al-Mutanabbi: for instance, says [Diwan: Vol. III, p. 80, l. 20]:

fa naħnu fi: jaḍalin, wa-r-Ru:mu fi: wajalin
wa-l-barru fi: ʃuγulin, wa-l-baħru fi: xajali:

(We are in exultation, the Byzantines in fear, the land is busy and the sea ashamed [i.e. the poet is speaking of the prince who fills time

/continued over

It should be noticed on the other hand that internal rhyme in A.T.'s poetry is the most interesting and most musically effective when it occurs within syntactically and/or phonologically parallel structures. This is particularly the case in this line quoted earlier to illustrate the muwa:zanah scheme accompanied with tarṣi:ɛ:

> tajalla: bihi ruʃdi: , wa ʔaṯrat bihi yadi: ,
> wa fa:ḍa bihi ṯamdi: , wa ʔawra: bihi zandi: .
> (Thanks to him, my good sense became evident,
> my hand rich, my well flowing, and my fire-steel
> [capable of] kindling [i.e. this is a symbol
> for success]).

Here, internal rhyme relates together four syntactically parallel words within four parallel sentences. The effect of this rhyme is to reinforce the already existing syntactic equivalence between the words in the corresponding sentences.

Footnote continued from previous page.

> and shore and mountain. His people are happy with him, the Byzantine enemy afraid of his power, the land full with his massive army and the sea ashamed because it cannot vie with his generosity]);

and al-Maɛarri: says speaking of a lady ["Siqṭu-z-Zand", poem 62, Vol. III, p. 1345, l. 20]:

> ʔalifti-l-mala: ħatta: taɛallamti bi-l-fala:
> runuwwa-ṭ-ṭala: ʔaw ṣanɛata-l-ʔa:li fi-l-xadɛi .
> (you frequented the desert [so much that] you learned in [its] waterless space the [beautiful] gaze of the gazelle and the delusive character of a mirage).

As a result, the reader (or listener) is led to note the end of each one, to pause on it, and, thereby, follow the poet in his 'enumeration' of the patron's favours on him. In a sense, internal rhyme works here as a lock to each one of the parallel members. With the reiteration, four times and in the same position, of the prepositional phrase bihi (i.e. thanks to him), in addition to the syllabic correspondence relating three of the four parallel members (except yadi:), the formal characteristics of the line effectively reinforce internal rhyme and contribute to the total musicality of the verse.

Internal rhyme, however, can equally be efficient even outside the context of syntactically parallel structures.

C. Correspondence of phonological and/or morpho-phonological structures: These two types of formal correspondence are relatable and often overlap in Arabic. It has been mentioned earlier that the morphological formation of certain classes of words in C.A. is often marked by a predetermined phonological structure, in which case the words in question are said to have the same morpho-phonological wazn, a term which refers simultaneously to interrelated grammatical and phonological entities (e.g. the words ʔa:hilu, da:hilu, ja:milu, sa:miru, ɣa:filu, xa:milu, etc. are related phonologically by the same syllabic structure cvv-cv-cv, and morpho-phonologically by the wazn: Ca:CiCu)[1].

The correspondence of phonological structure is

1. These are examples from A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, pp. 112-116, l. 1-10 to be discussed later.

the result of an identical syllabic structure between two or more words, in addition to the same vowels (i.e. a/a:, u/u:, or i/i:) exactly in their respective order within the corresponding syllables. The latter condition is indeed necessary to differentiate between words like mada:q (i.e. taste) and ʃami:m (i.e. smell) [A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, p. 274, l. 12] which, though sharing the same syllabic structure cv-cvvc, are different, however, as to their phonological structure because the vowels forming their respective syllables are not the same (i.e. /a:/ in mada:q, /i:/ in ʃami:m).

But ʃami:m, on the other hand, shares the same phonological structure as ʔadi:m (i.e. the tanned skin of a bucket) [A.T.'s poetry, Vol. III, p. 274, l. 14] because they both have the same vowels (a-i:), in the same order, within the corresponding syllables. Phonological correspondence of this kind is important when it relates together apparently disparate words in a line or group of lines, thus bringing out the 'echoic', repetitive pattern common to them. This does not exclude of course the importance which an identical syllabic structure (with no correspondence of vowels forming the syllables in question) might have sometimes when it emphasizes the rhythmic - thus musical - characteristics of poetry. This is particularly noticeable in the following lines where, repeatedly, A.T. uses (particularly in the second hemistichs) words of identical syllabic structure but with different morpho-phonological wazn[Vol. III, pp. 273-4, l. 11-15]:

1. ʔinni: kaʃaftuki ʔazmatan bi-ʔaɛizzatin
γurrin ʔida: γamara-l-ʔumu:ra bahi:muha: ;
2. bi-tala:tatin ka-tala:tati-r-ra:ñi-stawa:
laka lawnuha: , wa mada:quha: , wa ʃami:muha: ;
3. wa tala:tati-ʃ-ʃajari-l-janiyyi taka:faʔat
ʔafna:nuha: , wa tima:ruha: , wa ʔaru:muha: ;
4. wa tala:tati-d-dalwi-stuji:da li-ma:tiñin
ʔaɛwa:duha: , wa riʃa:ʔuha: , wa ʔadi:muha: ;
5. wa tala:tati-l-qidri-l-lawa:ti: ʔaʃkalat
ʔa-ʔaxi:ruha: du-l-ɛibʔi ʔam qaydu:muha: .

1. (You are the crisis which I overcame with [the help of] mighty [people who are] magnanimous whenever matters are in black [misery];
2. with [the help of] three persons like the three [qualities which you seek in good] wine: its colour, its savour and its scent;
3. and three [persons like] the fruitful tree whose branches, fruits and roots are equal [in making its exuberance];
4. and three [persons like] the leather-bucket whose rods, rope and [tanned] skin are [equally] effective for the water-drawer;
5. and three [persons like] the three stone-blocks [supporting] the cooking-pot, of which it is difficult [to know] whether it is the last which carries the burden or the foremost).[1]

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1. This translation is not very much in accordance with the text and the syntactic structure of most of these lines had to be twisted in different ways so that it could be rendered in English.

The repetitive pattern is very pronounced in these lines. Throughout, the listener is well aware of the presence of certain phonological schemes which strongly relate the words involved in an easily definable manner that cannot be compared with, or taken for an arbitrary unsystematic recurrence of structure. The relationship between these formal characteristics and the poetic situation will be further discussed. Meanwhile, our main concern is with the syllabic, and morpho-phonological correspondences between the various words involved in these lines. Indeed, several of those do not share the same morpho-phonological structure (wazn), and yet, they are identical as to their syllabic structure:

	the words		Morpho-phonological "wazn"	Syllabic structure
a)	bahi:muha:	(1.1)	CaCi:Cu/ha:	cv-cvv-cv-cvv
	ʃami:muha:	(1.2)	"	"
	ʔadi:muha:	(1.3)	"	"
	ʔaxi:ruha:	(1.5)	"	"
b)	tima:ruha:	(1.3)	CiCa:Cu/ha:	"
	riʃa:ʔuha:	(1.4)	"	"
c)	mada:quha:	(1.2)	CaCa:Cu/ha:	"
d)	ʔaru:muha:	(1.3)	CaCu:Cu/ha:	"

This is the reason why the feeling of rhythmic succession is quite pronounced in the preceding lines, especially in the second hemistichs, where the repeated syllabic structure of some words is on a par with the metrical division. Thus, in lines 3 and 4, respectively, the words ʔafna:nuha: (i.e. its branches) and ʔaʕwa:duha: (i.e. its rods), which share the same syllabic and morpho-phonological structure (cvc-cvv-cv-cvv/ʔaCCa:Cuha:), also correspond to the first unit of the metre (mutfa:ʕilun) repeated three times in every hemistich. To the two remaining units of line 3, for instance, correspond the two syllabically parallel words (tima:ruha: and ʔaru:muha:) coordinated by the conjunction wa:

3. ...	ʔafna:nuha:	wa tima:ruha:	•	wa ʔaru:muha:
	cvc-cvv-cv-cvv	cv-cv-cvv-cv-cvv		cv-cv-cvv-cv-cvv
	mutfa:ʕilun	mutafa:ʕilun		mutafa:ʕilun

This is equally applicable to the second hemistichs of lines 2 and 4 and partly to that of line 5, where the syntactic and phonological pattern of the previous lines undergoes a change, probably as a result of the poet's wish to introduce a variation in what might become a lengthy recurrence of a monotonous sound-texture.

In the preceding, there has been an attempt to show how the phonological correspondence between words of the poetic text may extend from a purely syllabic correspondence (regardless of the vowels used in the corresponding syllables) to another one inherent in the morpho-phonological structure of the words, bringing into the listener the impression that every one of them is an 'echo' to the others, thus reinforcing the rhythmic musicality

of the verse, There is more still to be said about the other repetitive patterns present in these lines (alliteration, internal rhyme, etc.). Let us note for now, however, that under this type of scheme (i.e. phonological and morpho-phonological correspondence) one may include a good variety of rhetorical devices recognized by the Arabs such as muwa:zanah (i.e. "Balance"), taqsi:m (i.e. "symmetry"), muqa:balah (i.e. parallel), as well as their different sub-categories.[1] Analysing those devices and comparing them would show in the end that, in most cases, they exhibit, in one way or another, a schematic correspondence of the types discussed above.

3. The overlap of phonological schemes

The three major types of schemes exposed in the preceding section are those on which the phonological devices most typical of A.T.'s style are based. Such a distinction does not mean of course that each given type occurs alone in a line of poetry, independently of the others. On the contrary, they usually interact and overlap in the poet's language providing the poetic structure with a complex network of interrelated schemes.

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1. For further details and illustrations of Muwa:zanah and Taqsi:m, see A.T. al-Maǰdu:b: "al-Murʃid", Vol. II, pp. 272-327; he gives a clear survey of the definitions of those schemes as traditionally studied, with comments, illustrations and interesting remarks. Any book on Arabic rhetoric deals with at least some of those devices; see for instance: Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 16-17 (on muqa:balah), pp. 19-20 (on muwa:zanah), pp. 20-31 (on taqsi:m and its variants: taʕqi:b, taqṭi:ʕ, tarṣi:ʕ, etc.) etc.

Thus, in A.T.'s lines quoted above [see p. 211], we shall note that:

- a scheme of alliteration relates the words ʔafna:nuha:, ʔaru:muha: (l. 3), ʔaɛwa:duha:, ʔadi:muha: (l. 4) and ʔaxi:ruha: (l. 5), which all share an initial /ʔa-/.
- Those words themselves enter in a scheme of internal rhyme (-uha:) with each other and with other words such as bahi:muha: (l. 1), lawnuha:, mada:quha:, ʃami:muha: (l. 3), etc.
- Some of them, on the other hand, enter in a full phonological correspondence (i.e. identical syllabic structure + identical vowels in their respective order within the corresponding syllables) with each other (e.g. ṯima:ruha: / riʃa:ʔuha:, etc.); others correspond as to their morpho-phonological structure or wazn (e.g. ʔaɛwa:duha: / ʔafna:nuha: ; ʃami:m / ʔadi:m / bahi:m, etc.); but most of them share an identical syllabic structure as has been shown earlier.

It is by being simultaneously related in such different ways that the poet's vocabulary provides his poems with complexity, variation and cohesion. On the other hand, it is, I believe, to the different contexts in which phonological schemes occur within the poem (i.e. whether they occur within syntactically parallel sentences, alone, or accompanied with antithesis, taqsi:m or muwa:zanah, etc.) that is due the considerable amount of rhetorical terminology fixed by the Arabs regardless of the common factor which this or that scheme might share with others.

Another way in which phonological schemes overlap and interact in A.T.'s poetry is very well illustrated by the following lines forming the erotic nasi:b introduction of one of his most famous panegyrics [Vol. III, pp. 112-116, l. 1-10]:

1. mata: ʔanta ɛan duhliyyati-l-ħayyi da:hilu ?
   waqalbuka minha: muddata-d-dahri ʔa:hilu ?
2. Tutillu-t-tulu:lu-d-damɛa fi: kulli mawqifin ,
   wa tamtulu bi-s-sabri-d-diya:ru-l-mawa:tilu ;
3. dawa:risu lam yajfu-r-rabi:ɛu rubu:ɛaha:,
   wa la: marra fi: ʔayfa:liha: wa-hwa ɣa:filu ;
4. fa-qad sahabat fi:ha-s-saha:ʔibu daylaha: ,
   wa qad ʔuxmilat bi-n-nawri fi:ha-l-xama:ʔilu ;
5. taɛaffayna min za:di-l-ɛufa:ti ʔida-ntaha:
   ɛala-l-ħayyi sarfu-l-ʔazmati-l-mutama:ħilu ;
6. lahum salafun sumru-l-ɛawa:li: wa sa:mirun ,
   wa fi:him jama:lun la: yaɣi:du wa ja:milu ;
7. laya:liya ʔadlalta-l-ɛaza:ʔa wa jawwalat
   bi-ɛaqlika ʔa:ra:mu-l-xudu:ri-l-ɛaqa:ʔilu ;
8. mina-l-hi:fi law ʔanna-l-xala:xila suyyirat
   laha: wuʃuħan ja:lat ɛalayha-l-xala:xilu ;
9. maha-l-waħʃi , ʔilla:ʔanna ha:ta: ʔawa:nisun ,
   qana-l-xaṭṭi , ʔilla:ʔanna tilka dawa:bilu ;
10. hawan ka:na xilsan, ʔinna min ʔaħsani-l-hawa:
    hawan julta fi: ʔafna:ʔihi wa-ħwa xa:milu .

1. (When are you going to forget the [lady] from the Duhl-tribe? or is your heart [to be] inhabited by her for ever?

2. [flowing] tears [soon] come out every time [I - the poet - stop] at the abandoned encampment [where] effaced dwellings [quickly] wipe out [my] composure;
3. [Those] effaced dwellings were never short of the spring [rain] which never passed disdainfully by their surroundings;
4. [On the contrary] the clouds have [extensively] drawn their tail [i.e. rain] over them, and their ground is [now] covered with [a luxuriant growth of] blossoms;
5. They no longer bear traces of the generous provisions which the bounty seekers used to get during the lingering [years of] drought;
6. [When leaving, their inhabitants] were headed by tawny spear-shafted cavaliers [accompanied with the] nightly entertainer [and followed by their] unfading beauty and a [huge] herd of camels;
7. [Those were happy] nights in which you [i.e. the poet] deceived [your usual] composure [and let] the antelope-like spouses of the boudoirs wander about with your reason;
8. [They were so] slender of waist [that] their anklets could have served as belts;
9. [Their eyes are as beautiful as those of] wild antelopes except that these [i.e. the ladies] are sociable; [and their shape is comparable to]

the spears of al-xaṭṭ,[1] but the latter are withered.

10. [All that] was a stealthy love-adventure, [but do you not know that] the best of love is the one in the sides of which you stealthily wandered).

From line 1, one is faced with the strongly alliterating pairs of words. Those, in most of the lines, occur in couples, and each couple in turn occurs in one hemistich so that the metrical bipartite division of the line is supported by 'phonological coupling'. In line 2, for instance, the pairs tuṭillu (lit. to cause to appear) vs. ṭulu:l (i.e. abandoned encampment) and tamṭulu (i.e. to wipe out) vs. mawa:ṭilu (i.e. effaced) occupy the first and second half, respectively. Similarly, in line 3, the pair rabi:ɛ(lit. spring) vs. rubu:ɛ (lit. lands or quarters) is balanced, in the second half, by the pair ʔaɣfa:l (i.e. surroundings) vs. ɣa:filu (lit. disdainful, inadvertent). This is also the case in line 4 (saña̱bat / saña:ʔibu; ʔuxmilat / xama:ʔilu), in line 5 (taɛaffayna / ɛufa:t), in line 6 (sumr / sa:mir, jama:l / ja:milu) and

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1. "al-xaṭṭ" is a place in Yama:mah (to the East of Hijaz) with which spears are generally connected, because they are brought there from India to be straightened. The place is indeed a coast for ships.
A spear may simply be called "al-xiṭṭ", as a proper name related to al-xaṭṭ or al-xiṭṭ. See: Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon, Vol. I, part 2, p. 760, column 3.

in the second half of line 7 (ɛaql / ɛaqa:ʔil). In all these cases, alliteration is strongly based upon etymology and word derivation (ʔiʃtiqa:q), that is, on a succession of different forms of words sharing a single root (e.g. tamtulu / mawa:tilu, l. 2, are both derived from the triliteral radical /m-t - l/). To use the rhetoricians' term for this type of scheme, we have here different instances of "jina:s of ʔiʃtiqa:q".

Alliteration with individual sounds is also profused in these lines. In line 1, for instance:

1. mata: ʔanta ɛan duhliyyati-l-ħayyi da:hilu ?
   wa qalbuka minha: muddata-d-dahri ʔa:hilu ?

the first couple of alliterating words (duhliyya vs da:hilu) introduces the pattern which will be continued in the following lines; the succession of /d/s, /h/s and /l/s cannot remain unnoticed; it relates the pair just mentioned to the words minha: (referring to the lady), dahr (i.e. for ever) and particularly to the rhyme word ʔa:hilu (i.e. inhabited), whose phonological structure will be encountered throughout the following lines and even throughout the whole poem.

The succession of gutturals (particularly of the /ɛ/ sound and its voiceless counterpart /ħ/) is equally noticeable in line 5:

5. taɛaffayna min za:di-l-ɛufa:ti ʔida-ntaħa:
   ɛala-l-ħayyi sarfu-l-ʔazmati-l-mutama:ħilu .
   ([The dwellings] no longer bear traces of the generous provisions which the bounty seekers used to get during the lingering [years of] drought).

The fact that these sound reiterations could have been avoided, had the poet resorted to the use of different words with no such correspondences, would entitle us to suggest that this feature was deliberately sought by the poet; in fact the articulatory depth of these gutturals seems to reflect the 'dryness' and 'emptiness' which the verse is describing. This will be further discussed when we come to the interpretation of sound-repetitions in A.T.'s poetry.

In line 8, the poet abandons the pairing of etymologically related words to use, instead, the same word (xala:xilu, i.e. anklets) twice in the line: this is a perfect example of the taṣdi:r scheme (i.e. 'fronting' - see sect. 2 above). The phonological characteristics of line 9 have been discussed earlier, when dealing with the muwa:zanah scheme [see this chap.,pp.188-9], but we shall have another opportunity to show its singularity amongst the other lines, further on. In line 10, the poet goes back to word-reiteration and alliteration with individual sounds. Thus, the word hawan (lit. love) is repeated three times, while the sound /x/ relates together a pair of semantically affined words (xilsan, i.e. stealthy, and xa:milu, lit. unknown).

Internal rhyme does not occur very often in these lines. Apart from line 1, where the final words of each hemistich rhyme with each other[1] (da:hilu / ʔa:hilu),

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1. This is the device known as taṣri:ɛ, a practice which is widely, though not invariably observed by the Arab poets. It generally occurs in the first line of the poem,where it is normally expected that the first hemistich should

/continued over

internal rhyme occurs only once, in line 10, where it relates the words hawan and hawan which are already forming a pair of homonyms (thus, alliterating and corresponding with each other as to their morpho-phonological structure).

After alliteration, syllabic and morpho-phonological correspondence is the scheme most prominent in these lines. Indeed, it relates many alliterating pairs of words as well as other words used in different verses. The most expanding structures are the following two:

a) Ca:CiCu which relates the words da:hilu, ʔa:hilu (l. 1), ɣa:filu (l. 3), sa:miru, ja:milu (l. 6) and xa:milu (l. 10);

b) CaCa:CiCu which is common to the words: mawa:tilu (l. 2) dawa:risu (l. 3), saña:ʔibu, xama:ʔilu (l. 4), ɛawa:li:[1] (l. 6), laya:li:[1] (l. 7), ɛaqa:ʔilu (l. 7), xala:xilu (twice in l. 8), ʔawa:nisu and dawa:bilu (l. 9).

Looking more deeply into these structures, one notes that

Footnote continued from previous page.

end in the rhyme syllable (in this case: da:hilu / ʔa:hilu). It enables the listener thereby to know, from the very beginning of the poem, not only its metre but also its rhyme.

1. ɛawa:li: and laya:li:, though ending with a long vowel, share the same underlying morpho-phonological structure as the other words. This long final /i:/ is the result of the assimilation of one of their radicals, a semi-vowel /y/, with the preceding /i/ vowel. Thus,
   laya:liyu > laya:liy > laya:li:
   CaCa:CiCu > CaCa:CiC > CaCa:Ci:
   ɛawa:liyu > ɛawa:liy > ɛawa:li: .

they are practically repetitive of each other, with the second one having just one initial syllable (Ca-) more than the first. To use the rhetoricians' term, we may say that we have here, at the abstract morpho-phonological level, different examples of jina:s na:qiṣ (i.e. incomplete jina:s). The prominence of words of a similar structure gives the lines a pronounced repetitive, 'echoic' effect, and endows them with a rhythmic - thus, musical - quality which would have been certainly different had this phonological feature been less prominent or any different. This is also the secret of the 'musical' unity and cohesion which one feels in the passage (and indeed in all the poem from which the ten lines were selected). It is for this reason that the question of how certain phonological schemes interplay in a certain poetic passage to relate most of the words involved, in one way or another, is more important than the mere existence of such schemes.

The arrangement of schemes within a given poem and the fact that a certain scheme runs more intensively in one section of the poem to leave the way for another one in a different section is an additional factor in providing the poetic style with variety and change. Thus, with line 9 for instance:

9. maha-l-waħʃi ʔilla: ʔanna ha:ta: ʔawa:nisun ,
qana-l-xaṭṭi ʔilla:ʔanna tilka dawa:bilu ,

what makes its singularity and gives it an outstanding quality in the middle of the others, is that the poet

completely abandons the pairing of alliterating words to replace it by a pairing of syntactically parallel sentences, strongly reinforced by phonological correspondence. This is equally the case later in the same poem where, in some sections, the listener strongly feels the presence of alliteration, while in others, this scheme leaves the way for other types of patterning to dominate the sound texture, or combines with them in one way or another.

Finally, the prominence of a certain phonological scheme and its consistency throughout the poem is another factor in deciding whether it is foregrounded or not. It was mentioned elsewhere that it is often difficult, because of the varying degrees of foregrounding, to determine whether a given feature is deliberately used by the poet for aesthetic purposes - that is, foregrounded. With regard to phonological schemes, it is their consistency, "the variation in the width of the gap between [their] initial occurrence and repetition",[1] and the way they interact and receive reinforcement from other types of schemes which, in their totality, provide us with helpful support in judging their 'cohesive' function and their contribution to the total euphony of the poetic structure. It is hoped that the preceding discussion has given a clear idea of how this process operates in A.T.'s poetry.

IV. The Textual Interpretation of Sound Patterns in A.T.'s poetry

It has been mentioned earlier that the Arab rhetoricians' approach to phonological schemes has very much

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 94.

neglected discussing the ways in which those elements combine with each other to give the verse harmony and musicality, and the ways in which they may be related to the poem where they occur. It was also pointed out that those schemes were generally viewed as mere verbal decorations and not as special poetic devices used by the poet to relate sound to meaning, or to accentuate, on a formal basis, a certain equivalence (either of similarity or opposition) between the elements of the textually described situation.

It should be recalled that the question of what and how patterns of sounds communicate is a newly observed concept and, as G.N. Leech puts it, "one of the most mysterious aspects of literary appreciation".[1] It would be unfair therefore to expect the Arab literary critics of the Middle Ages to engage in this endeavour of trying to discover the external significance of, for instance, internal rhyme and morpho-phonological correspondence as they occur in this line of A.T.'s poetry [Vol. I, p. 58, l. 37]:

> tadbi:ru mustaşimin bi-l-la:hi muntaqimin
> li-l-la:hi murtaqibin fi-l-la:hi murtaγibi:
> (... the contriving of one who clung to God,
> who took revenge for God, who waited on God,
> whose whole desire was [for God])[2];

(note here the morpho-phonological correspondence between:

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 95.

2. The translation of this line is by A.J. Arberry: op. cit., p. 56.

muɛtaṣim, muntaqim, murtaqib, murtaɣib; the internal rhyme common to the first two and the second two; the reiteration of bi-l-la:hi, li-l-la:hi, fi-l-la:hi; and the rhythmic effect resulting from their mutual combination).

To them, the musical effect produced by those schemes is their own justification and, in many cases, their only function. Moreover, in A.T.'s age particularly, with the great cultural expansion of the Arabo-Muslim society and the development of arts, in conjunction with a religious aversion to the figurative arts, taste has been growing towards music and other decorative arts (e.g. calligraphy, architecture, decoration of vessels, clothes, musical instruments, etc.). It is in this context that the development of Arabesque should be considered. In this society, poetry became more like a luxury and it was bound to be affected by the dominating trends of civilization and reflect the contemporary predilection for symmetrical designs. Hence the ornamental symmetry noticed, earlier in this chapter, in this line where A.T. is describing a horse:

bi-ħawa:firin ħufrin wa ṣulbin ṣullabin
wa ʔaʃa:ɛirin ʃuɛrin wa xalqin ʔaxlaqi:
([...] with digging hooves [i.e. denoting their hardness], a robust build, hairy legs [i.e. denoting their beauty] and a sleek body).

This seems devoid of any external considerations apart from the patterning of alliterating and syllabically parallel structures, supported by internal rhyme and

syntactic parallelism.[1]

To those cultural conditions, therefore, one has to relate the general tendency towards verbal decoration peculiar to medieval Arabic poetry and A.T.'s in particular. Because of those factors, this feature was to follow Arabic literature throughout the centuries until the Arabic Cultural Renaissance.

Thus, the auxiliary musical and decorative effects of phonological schemes and their contribution to the characteristic euphony of poetry are their main function in many cases. But it is possible in some cases to attribute a certain external significance to patterns of sounds in relation to some aspects of the textually described situation or, in other cases, to find some ways in which external considerations may reinforce and justify the presence of sound-patterns in a given piece of poetry. Those possibilities will be examined in what follows in relation to some examples of A.T.'s poetry.

Let us consider the following lines [Vol. III, pp. 151-152, l. 8-10]:

1. ʔaɛwa:ma waṣlin ka:na yunsi: tu:laha:
   dikru-n-nawa: , fa-kaʔannaha: ʔayya:mu ;
2. tumma-nbarat ʔayya:mu hajrin ʔardafat
   bi-jawan ʔasan, fa-kaʔannaha: ʔaɛwa:mu ;
3. tumma-nqadat tilka-s-sinu:nu wa ʔahluha: ,
   fa-kaʔannaha: wa kaʔannahum ʔaṁla:mu .

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1. This formal symmetry is also reflected by the written form of the line which exhibits the same division in pairs of the alliterating words:

خَوَافِرِ حُفْرٍ وَصُلْبِ صُلَّبٍ وَأَشَاعِرِ شُعْرٍ وَخَلْقٍ أَخْلَقِ

1. ([Those were] years of union whose length was made forgotten by the memory of remoteness, they look as though they were [a few] days;
2. Then came [the] days of separation which followed passion with sorrow, they look as though they were [endless] years;
3. Then those years and their people vanished, they [all] look as though they were [just] dreams).

In these lines, we encounter different types of phonological schemes which overlap in a complex manner. The most obvious feature is the verbal reiteration of ʔaʿwa:m (i.e. years), ʔayya:m (i.e. days), the expression fa-kaʔannaha: (i.e. it looks as though), and the coordinating conjunction tumma (i.e. then). ʔaʿwa:m and ʔayya:m rhyme with ʔaḥla:m (i.e. dreams). The three of them alliterate with each other in their initial /ʔa-/, and share an identical morpho-phonological structure (ʔaCCa:C). Phonological correspondence groups together the words waṣlin (i.e. union) and hajrin (i.e. separation) which form a pair of lexical antonyms; it also relates together the verbs -nqaḍat (i.e. they vanished) and -nbarat (lit. they came, they broke forth) which also form a pair of lexical antonyms in this context.

Jawan (i.e. passion) and ʔasan (i.e. sorrow), which balance each other in line 2, add internal rhyme to phonological correspondence and contextual antonymy (contextual, because normally ʔasan, i.e. sorrow, is to be opposed by a word for 'happiness' and not for 'passion'. However, the poetic context which includes a comparison

between opposite situations has made of the two words a pair of antonyms.)

The phonological patterning peculiar to lines 1 and 2 and involving the nominal groups ʔaʿwa:ma waṣlin (i.e. years of union) and ʔayya:mu hajrin (i.e. days of separation) is strikingly accompanied with their semantic opposition. These formal correspondences seem to accentuate the semantic opposition between the parallel members.

In the second hemistich of line 2, the sequence formed by the disyllabic words jawan and ʔasan (cv-cvc), rhyming together, marks a strong rhythmic change which seems to go on a par with the general meaning of the text, and reflect the meaning of the immediately preceding verb ʔardafa (lit. to follow immediately). In its position within the line, the sequence bi-jawan ʔasan is metrically parallel to dikru-n-nawa: (i.e. the memory of remoteness) in line 1, and fa-kaʔannaha: (i.e. it looks as though ...) in line 3, where, in both, a final long vowel contributes to the slow 'hammer-wrought' rhythm characterizing those lines. This rhythm is to be opposed to the one inherent in the sequence bi-jawan ʔasan (including two disyllabic words with no long vowels) which gives the rhythm a sudden acceleration that reflects the sense of the quick change of days from union to separation, from love to sorrow.

On the other hand, the verbal reiteration of the coordinating tumma (i.e. then) in the beginning of lines 2 and 3, followed in every case by two verbs phonologically and semantically parallel (-nbarat, they came, -nqaḍat, they vanished), together with the repetition of

fa-ka?anna followed in the three lines by the parallel rhyme-words (?ayya:mu, ?aɛwa:mu, ?aħla:mu), all those formal features and the slow rhythmic effect they produce in the passage tend to reflect the cyclical passing of time in the face of which, people, acts and feelings are all the same, doomed to end, to become past. To that extent, ?aɛwa:mu and ?ayya:mu (i.e. years and days), are equally the same in the face of time: they all pass and become just like ?aħla:mu (i.e. dreams); hence the morpho-phonological correspondences we noted earlier between those three rhyme-words.

The formal characteristics of these lines and the phonological correspondences and oppositions which relate them seem to bring those facts of life suddenly and intimately close to us; the poet seems to have successfully picked out from among the various linguistic possibilities available to him those which most perfectly "enact the sense", to use Mrs Nowottny's phrase.[1] Phono-logical schemes in this case are not just for decoration and ornamentation but, on the contrary, their presence is to a great extent justified by the external significance we find in them in relation to the poetic content.

Another instance of how external considerations related to the poetic situation may reinforce the presence of phonological schemes is very well illustrated by the

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1. W. Nowottny: "The Language Poets Use", p. 116; also quoted in G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 98.

following lines from one of A.T.'s poems (the passage has already been discussed in this chapter):

1. ʔinni: kaʃaftuki ʔazmatan bi-ʔaɛizzatin
   ɣurrin ʔida: ɣamara-l-ʔumu:ra bahi:muha: ;
2. bi-tala:tatin ka-tala:tati-r-ra:ħi-stawa:
   laka lawnuha: , wa mada:quha: , wa ʃami:muha ;
3. wa tala:tati-ʃ-ʃajari-l-janiyyi taka:faʔat
   ʔafna:nuha: , wa tima:ruha: , wa ʔaru:muha: ;
4. wa tala:tati-d-dalwi-stuji:da li-ma:tiħin
   ʔaɛwa:duha: , wa riʃa:ʔuha: , wa ʔadi:muha: ;
5. wa tala:tati-l-qidri-l-lawa:ti: ʔaʃkalat
   ʔa-ʔaxi:ruha: du-l-ɛibʔi ʔam qaydu:muha: .

1. (You are the crisis which I overcame with [the help of] mighty [people who are] magnanimous whenever matters are in black [misery];
2. with [the help of] three persons like the three [qualities which you seek in good] wine: its colour, its savour and its scent;
3. and three [persons like] the fruitful tree whose branches, fruits and roots are equal [in making its exuberance];
4. and three [persons like] the leather bucket whose rods, rope and [tanned] skin are [equally] effective for the water-drawer;
5. and three [persons like] the three stone blocks [supporting] the cooking-pot of which it is difficult [to know] whether it is the last which carries the burden or the foremost).

In these lines, the poet is praising three men of the Abbasid high society who did considerable favours for him and helped him through his crisis. The idea that this crisis is over is very well expressed by the sound-texture of line 1 and its syntactic structure beginning with an 'intensifying particle' ʔinni: (i.e. verily, truly, but in many cases not translated in English, as H. Wehr remarks[1]). Amongst the ten words forming the line, eight begin with a plosive (ʔinni:, kaʃaftuki, ʔazmatan, bi, ʔaʕizzatin, ʔida:, ʔumu:ra, bahi:muha), and amongst those plosives, six are voiceless (5 glottal stops + 1 voiceless velar /k/). This fact is significant: impressionistically, a plosive is harder than a fricative, and an initial plosive is even harder than a medial one which occurs between two vowels (compare for instance the effect of the /k/ plosive at the initial and in the final syllable of the word kaʃaftuki). The articulation of an initial plosive is vigorous and abrupt, and it is even more so when accompanied with voicelessness,[2] the absence of voice being one more factor to suggest the absence of softness. This is indeed the impression one gets when reading this line:

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1. H. Wehr: "A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic", p. 29, column 2, article "ʔinna".

2. These facts are noticed by G.N. Leech (op.cit., pp. 98-99) about English sounds, but I find them quite applicable to Arabic sounds as well.

1. ʔinni: kaʃaftuki ʔazmatan bi-ʔaɛizzatin
ɣurrin ʔida: ɣamara-l-ʔumu:ra bahi:muha:

The poet's tone, here, sounds sharp, incisive and energetic. Alliteration with glottal stops and initial plosives effectively serves to strengthen it. The geminated /z/ and /r/ following each other in the adjectives ʔaɛizzatin (i.e. mighty) and ɣurrin (i.e. magnanimous), also tend to add more intensity to the general tone of the line. The same may be said concerning the other cases of sound-reiteration also occurring in this line:

- ʔazmatan / ʔaɛizzatin,
- ɣurrin / ʔumu:ra / ɣamara;

of course, it is not implied here that all these choices have been deliberate on the part of the poet in order to fulfil certain effects; it is rather the sound-texture of the line which, requiring harmony and cohesion, as well as intensity, leads the poet's instinct to produce a string of phonological recurrences of the type we find in this line.

This effect of intensification is further reinforced in the following four lines where parallelism (syntactic and phonological) is quite pronounced. The repetition of tala:tah (i.e. the three) at the beginning of every line, and the series of four comparisons, all related to one basic idea, also aim towards intensification. The tri-partite division of the second hemistichs in lines 2, 3 and 4 (line 5 presents a slight change compared to the others) effectively serves the poet's purpose: that is to thank the three men who helped him and give them an equal

'treatment' in his poetry; hence the metrical correspondence between the three parts of those hemistichs:

1.2: ... laka lawnuha: - wa mada:quha: - wa ʃami:muha:

1.3: ... ʔafna:nuha: - wa tima:ruha: - wa ʔaru:muha:

1.4: ... ʔaɛwa:duha: - wa riʃa:ʔuha: - wa ʔadi:muha:

1.5: ... ʔa-ʔaxi:ruha: - ..... - qaydu:muha:

the metrical division: mutafa:ɛilun - mutafa:ɛilun - mutafa:ɛilun.[1]

Internal rhyme punctuates this division in each case and emphasizes thereby the feeling of balance between the parallel members. Those members are not only phonologically related, but also share an equal syntactic structure (apart from line 5 which is also slightly different from the others). Such a strong formal equivalence sets up a relationship of similarity between those hemistichs and brings them together under contextual synonymy.

The preceding discussion should not make us forget the role which all those schemes play in making the musical artistry of this piece of poetry. In fact, a good amount of the euphonic effects characterizing this passage are hidden in those schemes. This example shows particularly that A.T.'s rhetorical wit is in many cases

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1. The metre used in these lines is the ka:mil metre. In noting the metrical division of the hemistichs in question, I chose the ideal form of the unit (i.e. mutafa:ɛilun) which is repeated three times in every hemistich, regardless of the alterations it underwent here, in some cases: mutafa:ɛilun > mutfa:ɛilun (i.e. the first two cv's combine into one cvc).

the element which provides the main source of cohesion to his verse and endows it with special musical effects which may well be connected with the poetic situation, or even be given some extra-textual significance of the sort we pointed out earlier in relation with line 1 and the alliterating string of words it exhibits (alliteration, in this line, has a strong imitative effect).

A final example on how phonological schemes may provide A.T.'s work with a strong structural unity may be sought in his famous masterpiece on the conquest of Ammorium in 838 A.D. The poem - counting 71 lines - is in the praise of the conqueror, the Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim [see the poem in Vol. I, pp. 40-74]; its contents may be summarized as follows:

- lines 1-12: the Muslim swords have disproved the prediction of the astrologers who thought the time inauspicious for conquest.

- lines 13-22: the city which had never been taken before is compared to a woman.

- lines 23-35: description of the devastation; the fire in the city.

- lines 36-49: description and praise of the caliph.

- lines 50-61: contrasting description of the Byzantine emperor Theophilus; his flight.

- lines 62-66: further description of the siege, and of the women captured by the victors.

- lines 67-71: praise of the caliph and of the victory.

Phonological schemes, and particularly 'alliteration' (jina:s), are used throughout, but the listener cannot fail to notice the way this scheme is clustered in two passages: lines 1-3 and lines 63-66. In the first three lines [Vol. I, pp. 40-41, l. 1-3]:

1. ʔas-sayfu ʔaṣdaqu ʔinba:ʔan mina-l-kutubi fi: ħaddihi-l-ħaddu bayna-l-jiddi wa-l-laʿibi ;
2. bi: ḍu-ṣ-ṣafa:ʔiħi la: su:du-ṣ-ṣaħa:ʔifi fi: mutu:nihinna jala:ʔu-ʃ-ʃakki wa-r-riyabi ;
3. wa-l-ʿilmu fi: ʃuhubi-l-ʔarma:ħi la:miʿatan bayna-l-xami:sayni la: fi-s-sabʿati-ʃ-ʃuhubi .

1. (The sword is truer in tidings than [any] writings: in its edge is the boundary between earnestness and sport;
2. [Swords] white as to their blades, not [books] black as to their pages, in their broad sides [or texts] lies the removing of doubts and uncertainties;
3. And knowledge [resides] in the flames of the lances flashing between the two massed armies, not in the seven luminaries).[1]

The poet uses a different series of word-play to establish the contrast between knowledge, which is gained from the clear-cut results of battles, and the writings of the astrologers. As A. Hamori remarks,[2] the most charged

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1. The translation of lines from this poem is the work of A.J. Arberry: pp. 50-63.

2. A. Hamori: op.cit., p. 126; I am much indebted to this author for the ideas included in the discussion of schemes in this poem.

single word in the passage is mutu:nihinna which combines references to the 'swords' (matn, i.e. the broad side of the sword) and to the 'writings' (matn, i.e. a text). By means of verbal coincidence, two different objects of experience are brought together while their context puts them in contrast. A similar conflicting relationship is present in the juxtaposition of ṣafa:ʔiħ (i.e. swords) and ṣaħa:ʔif (i.e. pages) - quoted earlier as an example of jina:s by transposition [see this chapter, sect. 2, p.185 f.n.1]. The subtle phonetic difference in the latter pair of words is complemented by the fact that they occupy syntactically parallel positions (genitives in annexation constructions), but go with antonyms: bi:ḍ (i.e. white) and su:d (i.e. black), respectively. Line 3 exhibits a similar technique: ʃuhub (i.e. flames) and ʃuhub (i.e. the luminaries, stars) are two homonyms sharing an identical acoustic form; but in this case, the contrast is in the arrangement of the qualifying words: fi: ʃuhubi-l-ʔarma:ħi, in the first hemistich, and fi-s-sabɛati-ʃ-ʃuhubi, in the second. Introducing all this, we have in line 1, in fi: ħaddihi-l-ħaddu (i.e. in its edge is the boundary ...), another instance of homonymy linking together two objects of experience both phonetically and logically.

The contrasts set up in those introductory lines are very important, for they will be developed in different contexts throughout the poem. One should note here that the Caliph al-Muɛtaṣim is represented in this poem as acting

with God against falsehood. This fact makes it easier to understand why the contrast between 'white' and 'black', set up in line 2, and developed in the poem along with the idea of 'unveiling' or 'disclosing', gives the poem its framework right up to the last line which contrasts the Muslim victory with the Byzantine defeat [Vol. I, p. 73, l. 71]:

71. ʔabqat bani-l-ʔaṣfari-l-mimra:ḍi ka-smihimu ṣufra-l-wuju:hi, wa jallat ʔawjuha-l-ɛarabi .
(They [i.e. the days of victory] have left the sons of sickly "al-Aṣfar"[1] pale of face as their name, and brightened the faces of the Arabs).

In this line, the verb used to describe the victors is jallat (i.e. brightened), which is derived from the same root as jala:ʔ (i.e. removing, disclosing, clearing up) used in line 2. It will reappear later, in line 30, in the middle of A.T.'s description of Ammorium's devastation [Vol. I, p. 55]:

30. taṣarraħa-d-dahru taṣri:ħa-l-ɣama:mi laha: ɛan yawmi hayja:ʔa minha: ṭa:hirin junubi .
(Destiny revealed itself plainly to her as the clouds [disperse to] reveal [the sun], [disclosing] a day of fierce battle, [a day, at once] pure and defiled thereby).

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1. Note the alliteration or jina:s between ʔaṣfar and ṣufr, the first being a "nickname" used by the poet as a piece of mockery at the defeated 'blond' people (lit. the sons of the Blond, the yellow-haired), while the second refers to their 'pale' faces at their defeat.

This line is in fact preceded by a description of the confusion of light and darkness caused by the fires which shone by night and the smoke which then obscured the dawn [1. 26-29]. It was mentioned elsewhere, when dealing with antithetical parallelism,that such a succession of contrasts and oppositions is quite profuse in A.T.'s poetry [see chap.III , sect. 3B: antithetical parallelism].
In this line, the jina:s of ʔiʃtiqa:q (i.e. alliteration based on word derivation) which relates taṣarraħa and taṣri:ħ "simply holds together the aspects of the ensuing disclosure: the physical dispersion of clouds, and the revelation of historical truth, the destined Muslim victory".[1] The same could be said concerning the passive verb ħujibat (i.e. hindered, debarred) and the participle muħtajib (i.e. well-protected, or seeking concealment) which occur later, in line 38, in the next version of 'unveiling' [Vol. I, p. 58]:

38. wa muṭɛami-n-naṣri lam takham ʔasinnatuhu
yawman wa la: ħujibat ɛan ru:ħi muħtajibi
([a huntsman] glutted by victory whose spear-points were never blunt or debarred from [taking] the spirit of any well-protected [foeman]).

Here, alliteration conjures up associations of the other and basic meaning of the root, namely ħajaba (i.e. to veil); it relates the verse with the general theme of 'unveiling' and, more particularly, recalls the metaphor of the city

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1. A. Hamori: op.cit., p. 127.

as a woman encountered in lines 15-22. The end of the poem picks up these allusions and metaphors and, as at the beginning, the clustering of jina:s is accompanied with clustered images of light and unveiling. Thus, in lines 63-66, where the poet describes the captured women [Vol. I, pp. 71-72]:

63. kam ni:la taħta sana:ha: min sana: qamarin ,
wa taħta ɛa:riḍiha: min ɛa:riḍin ʃanibi ;

64. kam ka:na fi: qaṭɛi ʔasba:bi-r-riqa:bi biha:
ʔila-l-muxaddarati-l-ɛadra:ʔi min sababi ;

65. kam ʔaħrazat quḍubu-l-hindiyyi muṣlatatan
tahtazzu min quḍubin tahtazzu fi: kutubi ;

66. bi:ḍun ʔida-ntudiyat min ħujbiha: rajaɛat
ʔaħaqqa bi-l-bi:ḍi ʔatra:ban mina-l-ħujubi .

63. (How many a radiant moon was captured under the radiance of it [i.e. the battle], how many gleaming teeth under the cloud of it!

64. How many a means there was of coming to the curtained virgin, through cutting the cords of the necks [of their menfolk]!

65. How many a slender branch shaking on a sandhill the quivering drawn blades of the Indian [swords] attained!

66. White [blades] - when they were drawn from their sheaths, they returned with better right to the [Byzantine women], white of body, than [their] veils).

Alliteration, based on a skilful word-play, is particularly pronounced. But here it relates members of the poetic

situation which are opposites; in other words, the pairing of alliterates in these lines joins together different contrasting members, the violent and voluptuous, into uneasy couples. Thus, sana:ʔ (i.e. radiance) is common to both the war and the lady who is compared to a 'radiant moon' (l. 63). Similarly, the blades of Indian swords (quḍubu-l-hindiyyi) share the same acoustic form as quḍub, the women's hips which are compared to a 'shaking slender branch' (qaḍi:b) on sandhills (kutub), in l. 65. The use of homonyms having such contrasting referents reflects very effectively the historical truth that the clouds of the battles lead directly to the ladies' brilliant teeth, and the flashing flames of the spears are a means to voluptuous women. Sound connections here seem to depict the 'emotional ambivalence' for the poet (and his audience) of those joined elements of the poetic situation. Their particular semantic bonds seem to have occasioned the pronounced degree of phonetic patterning common to them.

This is to be opposed to the phonetic patterning present in the three introductory lines discussed above, where verbal coincidence seems to 'enact' the great confusion (between 'light' and 'darkness', 'tidings' and 'writings') present in Ammorium, confusion which was to be 'cleared up' by the Caliph and the sword's logic. Hence, the juxtaposition of these alliterating pairs related to different objects of experience which are contrasted with one another by the poetic context.

From the preceding, it has been shown how A.T.,

by means of alliterating clusters combined with contrasting bundles of imagery, succeeds in giving his poem unity and cohesion. The poet's imagery itself is conventional, but his skilful combination of traditional 'clichés' and hackneyed metaphors with alliteration and different types of schemes rejuvenates that tradition and invigorates the old conventions to show how considerable the possibilities of innovation within the tradition are.

Conclusion

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to trace the development of C.A. poetry in A.T.'s age towards formalism and verbal decoration in which phonological schemes make up an important part. Then, it has been shown how those schemes, regardless of the great confusion in which they were put by the minute and sometimes erroneous classifications of the traditional rhetoricians, may be considered as various instances of foregrounding and, more particularly, as cases of phonological parallelism which were analysed under three major types: alliteration, internal rhyme, phonological and morpho-phonological correspondence. Those schemes do not occur separately, however, but overlap, combine with one another and may be complemented by different sorts of patterning on the other levels of the linguistic structure to provide poetry with harmony and musicality which, along with metre, constitutes the basic component that relates poetry to music. Throughout,

A.T.'s work has been our reference for examples, illustrations and comments, especially because of the large variety of schemes it offers the reader. Finally we reached the stage of interpretation of sound patterns, an aspect which is thought to have been generally neglected by the Arab critics and rhetoricians, mainly due to their belief that rhetorical devices are different means of verbal decoration which are sought for their own sake. With reference to some examples of A.T.'s poetry, the attempt has been to show that phonological schemes are not only sought for that purpose, but may also be related to meaning and have some external significance in relation to aspects of the poetic situation. They may even 'communicate' sometimes and have certain imitative effects (a sort of 'onomatopoeic' effect), in addition to the musicality, structural unity and cohesion with which their presence may provide the piece of poetry.

CHAPTER V

METRE IN A.T.'S POETRY

I. Introduction: On the Foundations of Arabic Metre

Like rhetoric, Arabic metrics suffers very much from traditional theory (complicated conventions, detailed terminology, etc.). In itself, it is a wide subject which deserves a completely separate analysis, and only a brief account of it will be given here. It is hoped that this will shed light on the conventional norms of Arabic versification in view of which one can appreciate much of the occasional and deliberate devices of metrical foregrounding as they occur in A.T.'s work. This would help us to discover the great dynamism inherent in the metrical structure of Arabic, and also to show that the rhythm of a classical Arabic poem is far from being the rigid and monotonous component it is generally thought to be.

It is almost agreed upon by the experts who have dealt with the subject that the rhythm of Arabic verse finds its expression in some sort of quantitative metrics. They disagree however mainly upon the question as to whether (and to what extent) factors other than the quantity of syllables contribute to the shaping of Arabic poetic rhythm. Amongst those factors, stress will be particularly considered in the forthcoming sections.

1. The basic metrical components of Arabic

When considering al-Khalil's[1] system, one is faced with a major difficulty, namely the types of metrical components which he identified. Primarily, the system is based upon the simple opposition between 'motion' (ħarakah) and 'non-motion' or 'quiescence' (suku:n), that is, the opposition between a consonant-letter with a vowel sign (mutaħarrik, i.e. 'moving'; e.g. ka, fu, li) and another one with no vowel sign (sa:kin, i.e. 'non-moving' or 'quiescent'; e.g. k, f, l).

Following the system as it develops, 'moving' and 'quiescent' consonants are differently combined together to form higher components of which only three will be considered here,[2] namely the so-called sabab, waṭad and fa:ṣilah.

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1. al-Khalil Ibn Aħmad (died in Baṣra in 791 A.D.) was the first to establish the 'science' of versification as a major branch of Arabic linguistic research. Although al-Khalil's treatise on the subject (i.e. Kita:bu-l-ɛaru:ḍ) did not survive (probably due to the fire that hit Baghdad following the Tatar invasion in the year 1258 A.D. which destroyed so much of old Arabic writings) a detailed recording of his theory has reached us with the large work of Ibn ɛabd Rabbih (d. 328/940 A.D.): "al-ɛiqdu-l-Fari:d" (Vol. III, p. 146 ff.) and other old ʔadab works of Arabic. Al-Khalil's theory aims at the analysis and description of Arabic metres as used in pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry. Later, it was to be developed into a complicated set of norms by means of which the learner of poetry can distinguish the 'right' metres from the 'false'. Al-Khalil was the first Arab scholar to distinguish between the different metres, by dissecting them into basic metrical elements and giving them the names by which they are still known. His theory, summarized into a set of circles, was supplemented in detail by later prosodists, but those additions made no significant change to the basic concept. See G. Weil in New Encyclopedia of Islam, art. ɛaru:ḍ, Vol. I, p. 668; he gives a list of the major Arab contributions to Arabic prosody from the IVth to the XIIth c. A.H.

2. The other three will be ignored, either because they do not play any significant role as metrical components (their recognition by the Arab metricians may well be an aspect of the traditional predilection for detailed terminology and involved classifications), or because they are themselves the result of a further combination between two or more of the basic components.

a) sabab[1] consists of two consonant-letters the first of which is 'moving' while the second one is a 'quiescent' (e.g. kam, ka:, etc.). To use modern phonological terminology, one Sabab is equivalent to either a CVC or a CVV syllable. It should be mentioned here that vowel-lengthening in C.A. is equivalent to a quiescent consonant-letter; it is achieved in writing by adding the letter "alif" to the syllable ka, for instance, to make it ka:, the letter wa:w to the syllable ku to make it ku:, and the letter ya:ʔ to the syllable ki to make it ki:. In other words, syllables like CVV and CVC, though different to us in their phonological structure, have for the Arab prosodist the same structure CVC, the same metrical value, and are therefore capable of occupying similar slots in the metrical structure.

b) watad[2] consists of three consonant-letters of which the two first are 'moving', while the last one is 'quiescent' (e.g. laqad, kama:, siwa:). Syllabically, one watad corresponds to either CV-CVC or CV-CVV. Here again, the metrical equivalence between vowel-length and quiescence is to be noticed.

c) finally, fa:ṣilah[3] consists of three moving

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1. The Sabab considered here is the 'light sabab' (Sabab xafi:f). It is opposed to the 'heavy sabab' (sabab ṯaqi:l) which is a succession of two 'moving' consonants as in laka, lahu, etc.

2. This is the one traditionally known as watad majmu:ɛ (i.e. the 'united watad'). It is opposed to watad mafru:q (i.e. the 'separated watad') which is a sequence of two moving consonant-letters separated by a quiescent (.e.g. kayfa, baɛda, ṣa:ra).

3. This is the so-called fa:ṣilah ṣuɣra: (i.e. the 'smaller' fa:ṣilah), and is opposed to fa:ṣilah kubra: (the 'greater' fa:ṣilah) which is a sequence of four moving consonant-

/Continued over

consonants followed by a quiescent (e.g. rajulun, ḍarabat, lakuma:). Syllabically, one fa:ṣilah is thus equivalent to the sequences CV-CV-CVC or CV-CV-CVV.

In the selection of those metrical components, it is interesting to know that al-Khalil and his disciples thought in terms of possible word types and not in terms of syllables. This is even more obvious when we come to the metrical components of the higher rank, namely the "feet" or, to use a better term, the "metrical units". Those are the result of different combinations between the three basic components just mentioned. They are traditionally represented by eight different 'mnemonic words' which represent possible word-types in the language and are known as ʔajzaːʔ or tafʕiːlaːt. They are as follows:

1) faʕuːlun, 2) faːʕilun, 3) mafaːʕiːlun, 4) mustafʕilun
5) faːʕilaːtun, 6) mufaːʕalatun, 7) mutafaːʕilun,
8) mafʕuːlaːtu.[1]

As can be noticed, those mnemonics are represented by using

Footnote 3 continued from previous page.

letters followed by a quiescent one (e.g. ḍarabakum, laqiyani:).

1. mafʕuːlaːtu, the last of those metrical units, is mentioned here just because it has been considered by the Arab metricians amongst the others. However, an examination of ancient Arabic poetry would show that it never occurs in this form. Why it has been recognized in classical metrics as a major metrical unit remains obscure, but it seems that this is in order to complete al-Khalil's general system, itself the result of a certain preconceived vision of the metrical units (and consequently, the metres) as having, in theory, an 'ideal' form which occurs only with accidental variations in poetry. On this matter, see particularly K. Abu Deeb: "fi-l-Binyati-l-ʔiːqaːʕiyyah li-ʃ-ʃiʕri-l-ʕarabiː", especially the last chapter, pp. 447-524.

the triconsonantal root (f-ε-l) used also to generalize grammatical forms such as the active and passive participles and the like. With those mnemonics, the root (f-ε-l) is supplemented by derivational and inflectional additions which vary from one unit to another according to the ways in which syllables occur.

Every metre is a composition of metrical units which recur in definite distribution within all the metres. It is nevertheless possible to reduce those metres to their basic components, namely to the sequences of moving and quiescent consonant-letters forming the sabab, watad and fa:ṣilah components considered above. Indeed, if one looks into the different metres as traditionally presented in their different mnemonics, one notes that they are the result of different combinations between two of those three basic metrical components, namely:

a) watad + sabab

or b) watad + fa:ṣilah.

Henceforth, those will be called "rhythmical cores"[1] and will each be represented by a mnemonic word, thus:

a) sabab, whose syllabic structure corresponds to a CVC or a CVV, will be represented by the mnemonic fa:;

b) watad, which corresponds to a CV-CVC structure or a CV-CVV, will be represented by the mnemonic ɛilun;

c) finally, fa:ṣilah, which has the structure CV-CV-CVC or CV-CV-CVV, will be represented by the mnemonic ɛilatun.

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1. This is a translation of the Arabic word nawa:t, referring to the same components, used by K.Abu Deeb (Ibid.), whose reassessment of C.A. metrics I am partly sketching here; see particularly Chap. I, pp. 43-101 of this book. The term 'core' is also used by G. Weil (op.cit., p. 675) but is restricted to the core ɛilun only.

2. The sixteen metres of C.A. poetry

Traditionally, sixteen metres are recognized in C.A. poetry. They are represented in sequences of metrical units (tafɛi:la:t). By dissecting those units into smaller components, that is, into rhythmical cores, the metres will fall into two classes:

A) Those whose units are formed by combination of ɛilun with fa:;

and B) those whose units are formed by combination of ɛilun with ɛilatun.

Metres of Class A, in turn, fall in two categories:

A1) Those beginning with the core ɛilun;

A2) Those beginning with the core fa:.

Similarly, metres of Class B fall in two categories:

B1) Those beginning with the core ɛilatun;

B2) Those beginning with the core ɛilun.

Bearing in mind that the opposition is primarily between moving consonant-letters (i.e. CVs) and quiescent ones (i.e. Cs with no vowel sign, or the second vowel in CVV syllables), the symbol (-) will be used for the former, and the symbol (o) for the latter. In what follows, each metre is represented in its traditional form (T.F., i.e. in sequences of metrical units), then in its new form (N.F., i.e. in sequences of rhythmical cores) and, occasionally, in its poetic form (P.F.) when it differs from the theoretical model. A single line of Arabic poetry being a component of two halves or 'hemistichs' (ʃaṭr), rhythmically balanced against each other, only one hemistich will be represented below.

A. Metres whose units are by combination of ɛilun with fa:

A1. Metres beginning with the core fa: (10 metres):

1. al-Mutada:rak:

T.F. fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun

-o --o -o --o -o --o -o --o

N.F. fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun

2. al-Basi:ṭ

T.F. mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun

-o -o --o -o --o -o -o --o -o --o

N.F. fa: fa: ɛilun fa: ɛilun fa: fa:ɛilun fa: ɛilun

P.F. The last unit loses its first quiescent (i.e.

fa:ɛilun > faɛilun)

-o --o ---o

3. al-Rajaz:

T.F. mustafɛilun mustafɛilun mustafɛilun

-o -o --o -o -o --o -o -o --o

N.F. fa:fa:ɛilun fa:fa:ɛilun fa:fa:ɛilun

4. al-Ramal:

T.F. fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun

-o --o -o -o --o -o -o --o -o

N.F. fa:ɛilun fa: fa:ɛilun fa: fa:ɛilun fa:

5. al-Madi:d:

T.F. fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛilun

-o --o -o -o --o -o --o -o -o --o

N.F. fa:ɛilun fa: fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilunfa: fa:ɛilun

P.F. al-Madi:d is always used 'truncated' or 'shortened' in poetry, that is, its last unit (i.e. fa:ɛilun) is dropped in every hemistich.

6. al-xafi:f

T.F. fa:ɛila:tun mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun

-o --o -o -o -o --o -o --o -o

N.F. fa:ɛilunfa: fa:fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilunfa:

7. al-Sari:ɛ

T.F. mustafɛilun mustafɛilun mafɛu:la:tu

-o -o --o -o -o --o -o -o -o -

N.F. fa:fa:ɛilun fa:fa:ɛilun fa:fa:fa:fa

P.F. The last unit in every hemistich may occur in one of the following forms: mafɛu:la:t, fa:ɛila:n, or, more

-o -o -oo -o --oo

commonly, fa:ɛilun.[1]

-o --o

8. al-Munsariħ:

T.F. mustafɛilun mafɛu:la:tu mustafɛilun

-o -o --o -o -o -o - -o -o --o

N.F. fa:fa:ɛilun fa:fa:fa:ɛilunfa:ɛilun

9. al-Muqtaḍab:

T.F. mafɛu:la:tu mustafɛilun mustafɛilun

-o -o -o - -o -o --o -o -o --o

N.F. fa:fa: fa: ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:fa:ɛilun

P.F. al-Muqtaḍab occurs always in its 'truncated' form and exhibits the following structure:

mafɛu:la:tu faɛilun

-o -o -o - - - -o

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1. This is one of the most discussed metres of Arabic, mainly because it undergoes a variety of changes in its structure. K. Abu Deeb considers those changes as leading to different metres altogether and not simply to variants of one metre. It is the last unit which is affected by those changes and may occur in one of the following forms (-o--o), (-o-o-oo), or (-o--oo). On this matter, see K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., pp. 116-125.

10. al-Mujtatt

T.F. mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun

-o -o --o -o --o -o -o --o -o

N.F. fa:fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilunfa: fa:ɛilunfa:

P.F. al-Mujtatt occurs always in its 'truncated' form, that is with its last unit (i.e. fa:ɛila:tun) dropped in every hemistich.

A2. Metres beginning with the core ɛilun (4 metres):

1. al-Mutaqa:rib:

T.F. faɛu:lun faɛu:lun faɛu:lun faɛu:lun

--o -o --o -o --o -o --o -o

N.F. ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa:

2. al-Ṭawi:l:

T.F. faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun

--o -o --o -o -o --o -o --o -o -o

N.F. ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa:fa: ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa:fa:

3. al-Hazaj:

T.F. mafa:ɛi:lun mafa:ɛi:lun mafa:ɛi:lun

--o -o -o --o -o -o --o -o -o

N.F. ɛilunfa:fa: ɛilunfa:fa: ɛilunfa:fa:

P.F. al-Hazaj occurs always in its 'truncated' form, that is, with its last unit (i.e. mafa:ɛi:lun) dropped in every hemistich.

4. al-Muḍa:riɛ

T.F. mafa:ɛi:lun fa:ɛila:tun mafa:ɛi:lun

--o -o -o -o --o -o --o -o -o

N.F. ɛilunfa:fa: fa:ɛilunfa: ɛilunfa:fa:

P.F. al-Muḍa:riɛ occurs always in its 'truncated' form, that is, with its last unit (mafa:ɛi:lun) dropped in every hemistich.

B. Metres whose units are by combination of ɛilun with ɛilatun

B1. Metres beginning with the core ɛilatun (1 metre):

1. al-Ka:mil:

T.F. mutafa:ɛilun mutafa:ɛilun mutafa:ɛilun

---o --o ---o --o ---o --o

N.F. ɛilatunɛilun ɛilatunɛilun ɛilatunɛilun

B2. Metres beginning with the core ɛilun (1 metre):

1. al-Wa:fir:

T.F. mufa:ɛalatun mufa:ɛalatun mufa:ɛalatun

--o ---o --o ---o --o ---o

N.F. ɛilunɛilatun ɛilunɛilatun ɛilunɛilatun

P.F. In every hemistich, the last unit is replaced by faɛu:lun (or ɛilunfa:, i.e. --o-o).

To analyse Arabic metres in sequences of 'rhythmical cores' is in fact very helpful to overcome one of the major difficulties encountered in al-Khalil's system: that is the confusion caused by the number of metrical units considered and the different forms in which they may occur. Indeed, to represent the metres in their traditional mnemonics hides from us the common factor they all share, namely the rhythmical core ɛilun (--o) which is combined in two different ways either with fa: (-o) or with ɛilatun (---o) to form a metrical unit which is in turn repeated a number of times, or combined with another unit, according to the metre in question. In this way the role played by the small metrical components (i.e. the cores, that is: watad, sabab and fa:ṣilah) in

determining the identity of every metre becomes more obvious, a fact which justifies their recognition by the Arab metricians as basic metrical components.

3. Arabic metres: an instance of syllabic-durational metres

From the preceding, Arabic metres can be seen as different patterns of short and long syllables forming the rhythmical cores which are aggregated in a fixed order to form the metrical units. This is a characteristic feature of those metrical systems known as "Syllabic-durational" (commonly called "quantitative"), of which Arabic is an instance (and so are Latin and Greek). The syllabic-durational type of metres is itself a sub-class of a wider class of metres known as "syllabic-prosodic".[1] In the metres of this class, the occurrence of certain prosodic features is required, and the number of syllables on its own is not sufficient to create metrical rhythmicality. Thus, stress in English and German is the prosodic factor which regulates the number of syllables into a systematic metrical order (both German and English metres belong to the "dynamic" type of metres). In Chinese, on the other hand, tonal classes based on pitch features are the basic prosodic factor which plays an important part in the arrangement of syllables into metrical patterns (Chinese is an instance of "tonal" metres).[2] As for

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1. For more details on this matter, see J. Lotz: "Metric Typology" in T.A. Sebeok (ed.): "Style in Language", pp. 135-148.

2. Ibid., p. 140.

Arabic metre, the numerical regularity of syllables in the metrical pattern does not merely refer to the number of syllables (i.e. quantity), which is the sole characteristic of pure "syllabic" metres (e.g. French metre), but also to the order of the durational types of syllables in the sequence. This fact turns out to be particularly significant when we come to the second part of Arabic metrics, namely the one dealing with the different variations which the metres may or may not undergo in poetry. Indeed, while in certain positions of a given metrical structure only one definite syllable type is allowed, in other positions, variations are permissible and those belong to the routine licence of metrical patterning. Such variations are due to the fact that the sequence of 'moving' and 'quiescent' consonant-letters in Arabic poetry does not always correspond to the sequence as 'ideally' determined by the metres in their constituent mnemonics. In all cases, those metrical changes range from 'ellipsis' to the replacement of one type of syllable by another.[1] In addition, not all the changes are regular, that is, while some metrical changes result in different contrastive alternatives[2] (in the sense that if one change is adopted

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1. The Arab metricians speak here of ziħa:f which is customarily regarded as 'elision', although there is actually no elision in the words used in the unit. It is different from elision in English, for instance, where two syllables are reduced to the prosodical value of one to make the line conform to the metrical model. In Arabic, however, the word (or words) used in the metrical unit are pronounced normally, although the unit itself is a variation from the original.

2. As is the case with the changes affecting the final unit in every hemistich.

in the beginning of the poem, at a certain position, it should be the same throughout), others are nothing but accidental variations with no regularity, which occasionally affect the metrical units at different positions in the line, resulting in small quantitative changes.

With such variations, one should investigate those features related to the rhythm of Arabic verse which make it possible for a given metrical unit such as the unit (-o-o--o) of the Rajaz metre to be rhythmically harmonious, in the same poem and even in the same line, with units like (--o--o) or (-o---o), different in their structure. The latter units should not be considered as 'deviating' or presenting a 'defect' compared with the first one, as was traditionally accepted.[1] They should on the contrary be viewed as different units which can occur together in a line of poetry, or be rhythmically interchangeable without breaking up the general feeling of rhythmical harmony.

In his computer study of Arabic metres, M.T. al-Ka:tib asserts that

> "the Arab auditor, who is used to [listening to] Arabic poetry, accepts the omission, every now and then, of a quiescent consonant-letter without regarding this to be obligatory in the first half or the second, while keeping invariable the number of moving consonants." [2]

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1. Hence the value judgements about certain forms as 'good', 'acceptable' or 'ugly', which we often come across in the traditional metrical essays.

2. M.T. al-Ka:tib: "Mawa:zi:nu-ʃ-ʃiɛri-l-ɛarabi: bi-l-ʔarqa:mi-t-tuna:ʔiyyah, p. 55; also quoted by K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., p. 15.

Al-Ka:tib's statement explains very well the rhythmical correspondence between the Rajaz units (-o-o--o), (--o--o) and (-o---o) considered above: they all share the same number of moving consonant-letters, while the first unit includes one more quiescent than the last two. This is an additional element which supports the Arabs' approach to their metres and justifies the importance which they gave to the opposition moving-quiescent consonant-letters in their metrical system.

But al-Ka:tib's rule does not explain why metrical units such as (--o-o-o), (-o-o--o) and (-o--o-o) cannot be rhythmically interchangeable despite the fact that they count four 'moving' consonant-letters each. The same applies to the following two units: (-o--o) and (--o-o): they cannot be rhythmically interchangeable.

It is here that the order of the durational types of syllables in the sequence of rhythmical cores counts most; and it is here also that the importance of the rhythmical core ɛilun (--o), inseparable in its sequence and unchangeable in its quantity, it is here, I say, that the importance of this core is most significant in determining the identity of the unit and, subsequently, of the metre. Indeed, rhythmical harmony in Arabic verse does not merely depend on the number of moving consonant-letters present in the metrical unit or, in other words, on the quantity or number of syllables within the unit, but also on the syntagmatic relation between the basic core ɛilun (--o) and the other cores forming the unit, i.e. on the position of that particular core with regard to the other

cores related to it within the metrical unit. In this way, one can understand the lack of rhythmical correspondence between the following units, although they share an equal number of 'moving' consonant-letters:

a) - - o / - o / - o,

b) - o / - - o / - o,

c) - o / - o / - - o;

the core <u>ɛilun</u> (--o) is initial in (a), medial in (b), and final in (c).

The quantity of syllables and their sequential relationship represent therefore the foundation on which the rhythm of Arabic verse is based. Sequences of short and long syllables (or, to use the traditional distinction, of 'moving' and 'quiescent' consonant-letters) combine in a specific way to create different patterns referred to here as 'rhythmical cores'. Those in turn enter into further combinations to form the 'metrical units' which are arranged differently into metres. We shall see in the following section how the combination of rhythmical cores gives birth to different patterns of stress which play an important role in preserving metrical rhythmicality despite the quantitative changes which often affect the metrical structure.

4. <u>Rhythmical stress and Arabic metres</u>

Let us examine the following structure of the <u>Ṭawi:l</u> metre, for instance:

--o-o--o-o-o--o-o--o-o-o ;

it is the result of a combination between two basic rhythmical cores, namely ʕilum (--o) and fa: (-o), in such a way that the relationship between the two is well-determined. But presented as such, the present structure is 'lifeless', inert, and the mind is unable to perceive it intelligibly without attempting to divide it into separate 'groupings', and distinguish some groupings from the others in one way or another. This is a fact noticed by P.A. Scholes in relation to rhythm in music; he says:

> "It appears that the human ear demands of music the perceptible presence of a unit of time - the feeling of a metronome audibly or inaudibly ticking in the background, which is what we call the beat. Unless this is present, it is doubtful if any music can be said to exist, for even in the free rhythm of plainsong, it can be felt.
>
> And the ticks being felt, it is a further necessity that they shall be grouped in twos or threes. Indeed, the mind cannot accept regularly recurring sounds without supplying them with some grouping, if they have not already got it ... They [i.e. the groupings] are all groupings demanded by the ear for the sake of intelligibility, and differ in size (i.e. time-duration)..." 1

The close analogy between musical performance and the reciting of poetry entitles us to extend this statement to poetic rhythm in general, and to the rhythm of Arabic verse in particular. If we go back to the metrical structure of the Ṭawi:l metre as presented above:

--o-o--o-o-o--o-o--o-o-o,

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1. P.A. Scholes: "The Oxford Companion to Music", p. 878; partly quoted by K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., p. 234.

we shall find that it is necessary, in order to perceive any regularity in it, to divide it into separate groupings; we shall discover that it is the result of different combinations between the two basic rhythmical cores ɛilun (--o) and fa: (-o). Considering that each unit is composed of the core ɛilun and whatever cores of the fa: type following it up to the next ɛilun,[1] the groupings in this case will fall in twos and threes (i.e. in units of two cores and units of three), so that we have the two basic units peculiar to this metre, namely (--o-o) and (--o-o-o) repeated in this order twice in every hemistich. Hence the (ab-ab) type of unit combination characterizing this metre:

faɛu:lun / mafa:ɛi:lun / faɛu:lun / mafa:ɛi:lun.

The combination in this way of the rhythmical cores gives birth to a particular stress pattern which helps to define those groupings and perceive rhythmicality in their structure. Bearing in mind that the mnemonics representing the metrical units are nothing but possible word-types in C.A., stress in fact constitutes a fundamental part of their phonological structure.[2] It is therefore necessary at this

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1. It is established in the classical metrical essays of Arabic that a metrical unit should basically not have more than one watad, i.e. the ɛilun core (--o).

2. It should be remembered, however, that stress is not as essential in Arabic as it is in English, for instance, in the sense that the word's meaning does not depend on or change according to the way it is stressed. In other words, stress has no phonemic relevance within the word in C.A. There are, it is true, exceptions where stress turns out to be partially phonemic (e.g. ˈkamahan, i.e. blindness vs. ka-ˈmahan, i.e. like a deer; ˈwaṣafat, i.e. she described vs. wa-ˈṣafat, i.e. and it - fem. - became clear). In those two examples, the members of each pair are opposed to each other by the difference in the position of stress; nevertheless, the factor of internal word-boundaries, marked possibly by a moment of silence, should

/Continued over

stage to give some information on the basic rules of stress in C.A. Those rules apply equally to prose and poetry.

Although there are exceptions amongst the actual examples of poetry, exceptions which will be regular according to the grammar [see sect. 3 below], the metrical units generally correspond to word structure in C.A., and where the unit coincides with the word in poetry, the position of the stress is regular: it must be on one of the last three syllables, but not on the last; starting at the end and working back, it will be on the word's penultimate syllable if that syllable is a CVC or a CVV (e.g. 'waqtun, i.e. time; Ja'mi:lun, i.e. beautiful). If the penultimate is not of this structure, then the stress is on the antepenultimate, whether it is a CV (e.g. 'kataba i.e. to write; ħa'rakatun,[1] i.e. a movement), a CVC (e.g. 'markabun, i.e. a boat) or a CVV (e.g. 'ʕa:limun, i.e. a scientist). If one applies the preceding rules

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Footnote 2 continued from previous page.

also be considered in ka-'mahan and wa-'ṣafat: its role in preventing the confusion between the members of each pair is quite effective, in addition to stress. For further details, see R.S. Harrel: "A Linguistic Analysis of Egyptian Radio Arabic", in Ch. Ferguson (ed.): "Contributions to Arabic Linguistics", p. 10.

1. In words of this structure, I. Ani:s (al-ʔaṣwa:tu-l-luɣawiyyah, p. 121) asserts that the stress is on the fourth syllable of the word counting from the end (i.e. on ħa- of ħarakatun), which seems to me abnormal, at least in my own North-African reading of C.A. (other e.g. ma'likatun, a queen; ʃa'rikatun, a society; ħa'sanatun, a good deed). Such a disagreement may be due to the influence of our native dialects of spoken Arabic which affect to a great extent the stress patterns of C.A. in different areas of the Arab World. For further details on stress in Arabic, see: I. Ani:s: op.cit., pp. 109-123; D. Abdo: "On Stress and Arabic Phonology: a generative approach; H. Birkeland: "Stress Patterns in Arabic"; and T.F. Mitchell: Prominence and Syllabication in Arabic in B.S.O.A.S., vol. XXIII, part 2, pp. 369-389.

to the different units as represented in their traditional mnemonics, they will exhibit the following stress patterns:

1. fa'ɛu:lun e.g. ɣa'yu:run (i.e. jealous),
   - - o - o sa'bu:run (i.e. patient, enduring, perseverent) etc.
2. 'fa:ɛilun e.g. 'ka:tibun (i.e. a writer),
   - o - - o 'ḍa:limun (i.e. unjust, unfair, oppressing), etc.
3. mafa:'ɛi:lun e.g. qawa:'ri:ru (i.e. bottles),
   - - o - o - o mafa:'ti:ħu (i.e. keys), etc.
4. mus'tafɛilun e.g. mus'taɣliqun (i.e. obscure, equivocal),
   - o - o - - o mus'taʃriqun (i.e. an orientalist), etc.
5. fa:ɛi'la:tun e.g. ka:ti'ba:tun (i.e. women-writers),
   - o - - o - o ɛa:mi'la:tun (i.e. women-workers), etc.
6. mufa:'ɛalatun e.g. muṣa:'daratun (i.e. seizure, confiscation),
   - - o - - - o musa:'maratun (i.e. a nightly conversation), etc.
7. muta'fa:ɛilun e.g. muta'sa:biqun (i.e. a competitor, a contestant),
   - - - o - - o muta'ra:jiɛun (i.e. the one who withdraws, retreats or changes his mind), etc.
8. mafɛu:'la:tu e.g. maʃmu:'la:tu (i.e. things inherent in, included, comprised), etc.
   - o - o - o -

When combined with other units to form the different metres, every unit keeps its own stress. The result is the following abstract patterns of rhythmical stress:

A. Metres combining fa: and ɛilun

A1. Metres beginning with fa: (-o)

1. al-Mutada:rak: fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun
'-o - -o '-o - -o '-o - -o '-o - -o

2. al-Basi:ṭ: mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun
-o'-o - -o '-o - -o -o'-o - -o '-o - -o

3. al-Rajaz: mustafɛilun mustafɛilun mustafɛilun
-o'-o - -o -o'-o - -o -o'-o - -o

4. al-Ramal: fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun
-o -'-o -o -o -'-o -o -o -'-o -o

5. al-Madi:d: fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛilun
-o -'-o -o '-o - -o -o -'-o -o '-o - -o

6. al-xafi:f: fa:ɛila:tun mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun
-o -'-o -o -o'-o - -o -o -'-o -o

7. al-Sari:ɛ: mustafɛilun mustafɛilun mafɛu:la:tu
-o'-o - -o -o'-o - -o -o -o'- o-

8. al-Munsariħ: mustafɛilun mafɛu:la:tu mustafɛilun
-o'-o - -o -o -o'- o- -o'-o - -o

9. al-Muqtaḍab: mafɛu:la:tu mustafɛilun mustafɛilun
-o -o'- o- -o'-o - -o -o'-o - -o

10. al-Mujtatt: mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun
-o'-o - -o -o -'-o -o -o -'-o -o

A2. Metres beginning with ɛilun (--o)

1. al-Mutaqa:rib: faɛu:lun faɛu:lun faɛu:lun faɛu:lun
-'-o -o -'-o -o -'-o -o -'-o -o

2. al-Ṭawi:l: faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun faɛu:lun mafa:ɛi:lun
-'-o -o - -o'-o -o -'-o -o - -o'-o -o

3. al-Hazaj: mafa:ɛi:lun mafa:ɛi:lun mafa:ɛi:lun

\- -o'-o -o - -o'-o -o - -o'-o -o

4. al-Muḍa:riɛ: mafa:ɛi:lun fa:ɛila:tun mafa:ɛi:lun

\- -o'-o -o -o -'-o -o - -o'-o -o

B. Metres combining ɛilatun and ɛilun:

B1. Metres beginning with ɛilatun (---o)

1. al-Ka:mil: mutafa:ɛilun mutafa:ɛilun mutafa:ɛilun

\- -'-o - -o - -'-o - -o - -'-o - -o

B2. Metres beginning with ɛilun (--o)

1. al-Wa:fir: mufa:ɛalatun mufa:ɛalatun mufa:ɛalatun

\- -o'- - -o - -o'- - -o - -o'- - -o

The preceding table, it is hoped, shows once again the importance of the rhythmical cores (-o, --o, ---o) and their combinatory character. In fact, it is their sequential arrangement into various units which gives birth to those different patterns of stress and determines thereby the various rhythmical effects of Arabic metres. Those effects are the result of the changing stressed positions and the varying distance between the stressed syllables from one metre to another.

To sum up, one may say that Arabic metre is a skeleton built up on the basis of a number of units represented by different mnemonics which are repeated a certain number of times, in a specific order, to form a line. The line itself is composed of two hemistichs of equal balance. Each unit is identified by phonetic characteristics. It is a component of short and long syllables aggregated in a definite order to form the rhythmical cores which in turn combine to form the metrical

units. From the combination of those into metres, different patterns of stress are created. In addition, there are some other sound features which help to mark off the line, namely its rhyme scheme which is often accompanied by a fall on the pitch of the voice at the end; in this way, rhyme perfectly assumes its function: it produces or contributes to a feeling of finality and marks the end of the metrical cycle which is repeated from line to line, throughout the poem.

This metrical skeleton has to be filled out by linguistic elements - grammatical and lexical units - which have their own expectations of phonological form and constitute what R. Fowler calls "prose rhythm".[1] They have their own stress patterns and syllabic arrangement which may or may not correspond with those of the metrical 'matrix' which they are made to occupy.[2] It is the poet's task to try and 'reconcile' between the two competing phonological structures. In his act of poetic creation, he has to deal with his language in such a way as to produce a verse which reflects that 'compromise' between the two coexistent patterns of prosody: the one produced by the metre, and the one by the requirements of the grammatical construction into which the linguistic elements enter,

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1. R. Fowler: "Prose Rhythm and Metre" in R. Fowler (ed.): Essays on Style and Language, pp. 82-99.

2. On the differences between theory and practice with regard to stress patterns and syllabic arrangement in the metrical units, see examples from A.T.'s verse discussed below, in sect. 3, particularly the one on pp.279-281.

and the syllabic context in which they occur. He must also adjust the boundaries between the grammatical units present in his verse so that they coincide or not with those between the metrical units. Of course, one cannot speak of two coexistent prosodic systems in the poem; this would be physically impossible, as R. Fowler rightly observes. We would rather speak of "two coexistent influences":[1] one is determined by the metrical conventions of the language, while the other is found in the grammatical and lexical forms chosen to fill the metrical 'slots'.

How this work of 'reconciliation' can be achieved in poetry is a question to be dealt with in the following sections with regard to A.T.'s verse. The interacting of prose-rhythm and metre in his poetry will be first assessed. Here, the relationship between verse form and other aspects of Arabic linguistic structure will be examined and the feature of enjambment will be briefly considered. Finally, rhyme will be studied and its function and musical resources will be brought to light in relation to A.T.'s poetry, in particular, and C.A. poetry, in general. But first of all, we shall have to indicate what metres A.T. has mostly used in his poetry in an attempt to trace the possibility of any development - from this point of view - in which he might have taken part, and examine the factors which govern the poet's selection of the metres in which he composes.

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1. R. Fowler: op.cit., p. 85.

II. The Distribution of Metres in A.T.'s Poetry

In order to trace the distribution of metres in A.T.'s poetry, it is necessary to examine the same feature in Arabic poetry of earlier ages so that we get more scope for comparisons and conclusions. For these ends, the statistical works of some scholars who were interested in this matter will be used.[1]

The examination of C.A. poetry of early ages (i.e. VIIth to the first half of the VIIIth century A.D.) shows the domination of a group of metres including Ṭawi:l, Wa:fir, Basi:ṭ and Ka:mil. Amongst those metres, the supremacy of Ṭawi:l is overwhelming. Thus, in al-Jamharah and Mufaḍḍaliyya:t - two anthologies of early Arabic poetry which contain nearly 5200 verses - Ṭawi:l is preponderant in 34% of the cases, followed by Ka:mil with 19%, then Basi:ṭ with 17% and Wa:fir with 12%.[2] Then follow other metres with less popularity like Mutaqa:rib, xafi:f, Ramal, Munsariħ, etc. The order of the dominating metres varies from one poet to another, but this group still remains ahead of the others in expansion. Significantly enough, in the work of Du-l-Rummah (died in 725 A.D.) which contains 78 pieces of poetry, 79.5% of them were composed in Ṭawi:l, 11.5% in Basi:ṭ and 9% in Wa:fir, which means that 100% of this

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1. I am referring particularly to an article by J. Vadet: "Contribution à l'Histoire de la Métrique Arabe" in Arabica, II, 1955, pp. 313-321; to I.Anis: "Mu:si:qa-l-ʃiɛr", pp. 182-206; to J. Ben Cheikh: "Poétique Arabe", pp. 203-227. With regard to A.T.'s poetry, the figures to be given later are all the result of my own work.

2. I. Ani:s: "Mu:si:qa-ʃ-ʃiɛr", p. 189.

poet's work were in three of the four major Arabic metres. From this point of view, he may be considered as the Arab poet most representative of pure classicism.[1]

The census of metres made in the poetry of the second half of the VIIIth century and the beginning of the IXth - i.e. the period immediately preceding A.T.'s age - reflects some important changes. Thus, for a total of 2569 pieces, the major group of metres is formed as follows:

Ṭawi:l:	19.8%	Basi:ṭ:	13.5%
	508 pieces		347 pieces
Ka:mil:	11.5%	Sari:ɛ:	9.8%
	296 pieces		252 pieces
	TOTAL: 1403 pieces.		

Following them closely, we have the Wa:fir metre (8.9% - 228 pieces) and the xafi:f metre (8.25% - 212 pieces).[2]

The four metres which, in a different order, used to be most prominent in the previous period continue to be so with the exception that the Wa:fir metre concedes its place to Sari:ɛ. On the other hand, Ṭawi:l no longer exerts its previous influence over the other metres, with Basi:ṭ, Ka:mil and Sari:ɛ closely following. Poets in this period, most of them from the cities, seem to be more attracted by the precedingly less popular metres, a fact

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 210; also J. Vadet, op.cit., p. 315.

2. J. Vadet: op.cit., pp. 316-317 and J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 213. This census was made in the works of five major poets of the period: Baʃʃa:r, Ibnu-l-ʔaħnaf, Muslim, Abu: Nuwa:s and Abu-l-ɛata:hiyah.

which is shown in the noticeable ascension of metres like Sari:ɛ. xafi:f and Munsariħ. One must also note the increasing popularity of the truncated or shortened metres (12.45% against 4.89% earlier) which seem to offer the favourite basis for musical compositions (probably due to their length), particularly in great demand in the big cities. Al-xafi:f metre apparently owes its greater popularity to the growth of music and poetry in the civilized circles of the cities as well.[1] This is probably due to its structure (fa:ɛila:tun mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun) which bears a strong similarity to other metres like Mujtatt (mustafɛilun fa:ɛila:tun) and the truncated Ramal (fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛila:tun), a characteristic which apparently endows it with great musical fluency.

Poetry of the IXth century A.D. in turn shows the domination of a major metrical group formed by the following metres:

Ka:mil: 20.6%, Ṭawi:l: 18.81%; Basi:ṭ: 15.27%; xafi:f: 12.16%; followed by Wa:fir with 9.63%.[2]

Thus, Ṭawi:l has finally conceded its first place to Ka:mil, and al-xafi:f's ascendance as an important lyrical metre has continued. The growing popularity of Sari:ɛ has also

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1. This fact has been noticed in relation with the Umayyad poet ɛumar Ibn Abi: Rabi:ɛah (d. 719 A.D.) who used al-xafi:f metre in 23% of his work (against 0.69% only in the census of J. Vadet in the poetry of the earlier period). This was partly explained by the fact that he was a poet from the city who worked hand in hand with musicians. See: J. Vadet: op.cit., pp. 320-321; and J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., pp. 208 and 211.

2. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 219; this census is made in the works of the major poets of this period, namely: Ibnu-l-Dañña:k, Diɛbil, Di:ku-l-Jinn, Ali Ibnu-l-Jahm, Abu: Tamma:m and al-Buñturi: (that is, in a total of 1668 pieces of poetry).

continued, but not enough to bring it into the dominating group of metres (6.52% only), while al-Basi:t's progression seems to be rather constant. On the other hand, one notes that the truncated metres no longer enjoy the popularity which they had with poets of the earlier generation, with the exception maybe of Ibnu-l-Dañña:k who used those metres in 15.28% of his verse. In this, the poets of this generation reflect the 'Return to Antiquity' tendency of their school and rejoin the old poetic tradition which they intended to revive.

Those figures are to be compared to those of the following census made exclusively in the work of A.T. and related to a total of 479 pieces. In these calculations, there has been no distinction between full poems and fragments or small pieces of poetry since they all manifest the choice of a particular metre. Three metres are left out, namely Muḍa:riɛ, Muqtaḍab and Mutada:rak in which A.T. did not have any poetry (as is the case with them in most periods of C.A. poetry). The arrangement of figures in the table is made according to the major poetic genres of A.T.'s verse:

The Distribution of Metres in A.T.'s Poetry

	Panegyrics	Self-praise	Elegies	Satires	Love	ʿita:b or reproof	waṣf or descriptive poetry	Zuhd or sapient poetry	TOTAL
Tawi:l	36	3	13	3	18	5	3	4	85
Ka:mil	55	1	5	25	22	8	5		121
Basi:t	39	2	6	12	15	8	3		85
Wa:fir	18	1	1	12	7	2	2	1	44
Xafi:f	11		3	11	35	4			64
Sari:ʿ	5		1	7	17	1	1		32
Mutaqa:rib	1		1	3		1			6
Munsariḥ	8			3	7				18
Rajaz		1		1			6		8
Hazaj				2	1				3
Ramal	1				6		1		8
Mujtatt				1	1				2
Madi:d					3				3
TOTAL	174	8	30	80	132	29	21	5	479

Notes:

A.T.'s collection of poems in its modern edition, compiled in 4 Volumes, seems to contain some mistakes in the numbering of the pieces. Thus, Vol. III ends with piece No. 175, while Vol. IV begins with piece No. 180. Then, at the very end of Vol. IV, we have piece No. 488 followed immediately by piece No. 490, the last piece in the collection. In this way, we are left with a total of 485 pieces instead of 490 as is shown in the collection. This might well be due to a series of misprints.

From those, only 479 pieces have been considered in the census above. The six other pieces were left out because they were composed in metres not attested by the Arab metricians because unused in old poetry and rarely used by the poets of A.T.'s time. Apart from one piece (Vol. II, pp. 223-233 - 34 lines) composed in a metre strikingly similar to Munsariḥ, but with many variations (this is also the case with the four-line long piece in Vol. IV, p. 431), all the others are but small fragments of poetry ranging between 5 and 10 lines at most

/Continued over

From the preceding table, one may draw the following conclusions:

a) The tendencies noticed earlier concerning the metres used in the poetry of this age are confirmed here, in A.T.'s poetry. Thus, the supremacy of Ka:mil appears to be almost total in his work, with the exception of his love poems which are dominated by al-xafi:f metre. His most important metres are: Ka:mil with 25.3%, Ṭawi:l and Basi:ṭ with 17.8% each, xafi:f with 13.9% and Wa:fir with 9.2%; then follow Sari:ε with 6.7%, Munsariħ with 3.8% and the remaining metres together with 5.9%.

b) The growing influence of xafi:f and Sari:ε seems to have been achieved mainly in his love poems of which they dominate almost 39.4%. This might explain their importance as two major lyrical metres, and reflect a certain relationship between the poetic genres and the poet's selection of his metres. On the other hand, this feature confirms the presence of a real change in A.T. and most poets of his generation: although they stand as the inheritors of the classical poetic tradition, their socio-cultural environment has changed them from the bedouins they were into city poets with a certain inclination towards

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Footnote continued from previous page

(Vol. I, p. 108, Vol. IV, pp. 299, 355, 365). Those may have been different attempts by A.T. to get away from the usual metrical structures, although they all bear a strong similarity to metres attested by the metricians (particularly to Basi:ṭ, xafi:f and Munsariħ). For those reasons, and because they were restricted mainly to short fragments of poetry in the less 'serious' of A.T.'s compositions, it is felt that those attempts may well be ignored here, especially if one recalls that they do not seem to have had any success at all in C.A. poetry.

metres hitherto 'underprivileged' by the tradition.

c) The decline, begun earlier, of Rajaz and Mutaqa:rib is further confirmed here. A.T.'s use of Rajaz particularly has been mainly in pieces of short length, in the less prominent of his poetic genres (found in Vol. IV of his collected works), a fact which seems to indicate that he considered it as a metre of the second rate, useful mainly for improvisation or non-serious poetry. The same may be said about Hazaj, Mujtatt, Madi:d (which he used only in their truncated form, as did most of his predecessors) and Ramal (used truncated in 6 out of 8 pieces).

d) Finally, the sudden set-back of the truncated metres witnessed in this period is also confirmed here. Of the major truncated metres, A.T. used al-Ka:mil (in 2 pieces), xafi:f (in 5 pieces) and Ramal (in 6 pieces). But like the poets of his generation and those of the tradition to which he belongs, A.T. was more inclined towards 'long' metres, used in their normal forms (i.e. not truncated), those which have enjoyed constant popularity with different generations of Arab poets.

This factor of length is particularly important. Indeed, to go back and reconsider, in their ideal forms, the metres most used by A.T., one will find that they fall into three major groups:

a) Ka:mil and Wa:fir : with 15 syllables each in every hemistich

b) Ṭawi:l and Basi:ṭ : with 14 syllables each in every hemistich

c) xafi:f, Sari:ɛ and Munsariħ : with 12 syllables each in every hemistich.

Thus, the most expanding metres of his poetry - and indeed of all Arabic poetry- share a common feature, namely their longer duration and greater syllabic quantity than most of the others. A characteristic feature of an Arabic single verse is its length as compared with some of its counterparts in European languages. J. Ben Cheikh reminds us of the figures given by G. Lote and A. Spire in relation to the reciting of French verse: while a verse from Hernani takes a maximum of 6.12 seconds, and a verse from Andromaque a minimum of 1.75 seconds, a verse in the Basi:ṭ metre by A,T., on the oscillograph, marks an average of 900 c/s, that is, 9 seconds, for a normal rendering.[1] This means that the poet's choice is clearly made amongst the metres which offer more 'space' for him to set up his sentences in every line, and save him the trouble of dealing with the further constraint of short metres and their reduced syllabic quantity. Ṭawi:l, Basi:ṭ, Wa:fir and Ka:mil fulfil this condition, and so does al-Madi:d metre, but only theoretically (with 28 syllables in a line), for in practice, this metre has been only used in its truncated form which apparently encountered little success with the Arab poets. Amongst the metres with 24 syllables, xafi:f and Sari:ɛ seem to have enjoyed a certain popularity, probably for the same reason, but others, of the same group, have not. There must be therefore one more

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 237.

criterion, other than duration and syllabic quantity, which promotes certain metres over the others. This criterion, J. Ben Cheikh suggests, should be looked for in the structure of the different metres.[1]

It was mentioned earlier [see this chapter, sect. 1] that Arabic metres are formed by the combination and repetition of one or two units. On this basis, the Arabs distinguish the 'simple metres' (buħu:r mufradah) and the 'compound metres' (buħu:r murakkabah). If we consider the latter, we shall notice that they fall into two classes:

- those made up of three units to a hemistich;
- those made up of four units to a hemistich.

The first apparently have an equal combination of units which is two to one; but they differ in their arrangement of those units, some placing the odd unit in the middle (a - b - a; e.g. xafi:f), others placing it at the end (a - a - b; e.g. Sari:ɛ), and a third group placing it at the beginning (a - b - b; e.g. Muqtaḍab).

The second class contains metres which are made up of two units of combination (ab - ab; e.g. Ṭawi:l, Basi:ṭ).

Of the metres most used in A.T.'s poetry and C.A., three belong to the compound type, namely Ṭawi:l, Basi:ṭ and xafi:f and they all are more prominent than the simple metres on whose combined units they are based.

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., pp. 238-240.

Thus, Ṭawi:l is more prominent than Mutaqa:rib (whose structure is faɛu:lun x 4 to a hemistich) and Hazaj (mafa:ɛi:lun x 3); Basi:ṭ is more prevailing than Rajaz (mustafɛilun x 3) and Mutada:rak (fa:ɛilun x 4); and xafi:f is more dominating than Ramal (fa:ɛila:tun x 3) and Rajaz (mustafɛilun x 3). Two compound metres are left out here because they have been rarely used, namely Madi:d and Muḍa:riɛ; but their simple components (Mutada:rak and Ramal, Hazaj and Ramal, respectively) did not have any significant success either.

On the basis of those first observations, it is possible to conclude that the compound metres, by the more variety of combination they exhibit in their structure, are more convenient for poetic creation than their simple counterparts. Amongst the other compound metres not mentioned so far, Munsariḥ is used by A.T. with relative frequency (18 pieces - 3.8%), while Mujtatt (used twice) and Muqtaḍab (not used at all) owe their lack of popularity to the short length of the former (used always in its truncated form as noted earlier), and the strong rhythmic similarity between the latter and the Sari:ɛ metre whose rhythmic structure has prevailed, particularly in the later stages of C.A. poetry.

As for the remaining 'simple' metres, Ka:mil and Wa:fir, they present in their basic units (mutafa:ɛilun and mufa:ɛalatun), counting five syllables each, a convenient space for composition without much constraint of duration, hence their significant predomination in A.T.'s poetry and C.A. in general. On the other hand, al-Wa:fir's

popularity may also be explained by the fact that it has been always used, as noticed earlier, with its final unit replaced by faɛu:lun, thus giving the metre an (aab) structure with additional rhythmical variation.

Finally, the ascension of Ka:mil at the expense of Ṭawi:l, a characteristic of this period which is confirmed by A.T.'s poetry, may be explained by the fact that although Ṭawi:l is a highly musical metre with its tendency to group itself into sequences of two units each, it remains however characterized by its traditional rigidity as compared to Ka:mil whose final unit may have up to nine different forms, with each one having its particular effect on the rhythmical structure of the verse.[1]

To conclude, one may say that, in the metres which he used, A.T. reveals himself more like a successor than an innovator. Like the poets of his generation, his work emphasizes certain tendencies and continues a movement which had started with his immediate predecessors.

III. The Interaction of 'Prose Rhythm' and Verse Form in A.T.'s Poetry

The preceding sections may suggest that the choice of metres and the ways language is adjusted to their rules

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1. Muḍa:riɛ, Muqtaḍab and Mujtatt have only one form, Hazaj, two; they all are rarely used. Basi:ṭ, Sari:ɛ and Mutaqa:rib have up to six possible forms; xafi:f and Rajaz five forms. As J. Ben Cheikh notes (op.cit., p. 243, fn. 40), one can only suggest the presence of this factor of rhythmical variations possible within every metre, without deciding that it is the one behind the poet's selection of a particular metre. Madi:d, for instance, offers six possible variations in its final unit, and Mutada:rak four, yet they are rarely used in Arabic poetry.

are the result of a conscious knowledge on the part of the poet, in the sense that he knows the metrical norms beforehand, understands the fundamental elements of the metrical theory and, therefore, tries to comply with them in the poems which he creates. However, this is not exactly the case; for metre is rather an "unconscious norm"[1] applied instinctively by the poet as he proceeds with his work. "It is really odd", says Baum speaking of English poets, "that for five hundred years, our poets have written admirable verse without understanding the principle of it".[2] This statement can be equally applied to the Arab poets,[3] and the Arab scholars of the Middle Ages did not fail to recognize it. Thus, to Quda:ma, Ibn Ṭaba:ṭaba: and Ibn Raʃi:q, the real poet need not know the rules of metrics, since a natural disposition (ṭabɛ) and an instinctive judgement (dawq) would lead him to find them.[4] On the other hand, one should recall that al-Khalil's metrical system did not precede poetic creation, nor did it exist outside poetry, independently of it; in

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1. Expression used by G.N. Leech: "A Linguistic Guide ...", op.cit., p. 119.

2. Baum: Introduction to S. Launier: "The Science of English Verse and Essays on Music", quoted by J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 229, fn. 1.

3. It is significant that Arabic metrics, as a science studying verse form, was established only centuries after a sophisticated poetic tradition had been developed. It is well known that the vast majority of pre-Islamic poets whose works have served to compile the richest anthologies of Arabic literature were just illiterate bedouins with little or no education at all.

4. Quda:ma Ibn Jaɛfar: "Naqdu-ʃ-ʃiɛr" Introduction, pp. 2 and 3; Ibn Ṭaba:ṭaba: "ɛiya:ru-ʃ-ʃiɛr", Introd. Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. I, pp. 134 and 151.

fact, it emerged from it and, therefore, cannot be considered as "une science dont les lois préexistent à l'art, ou tentent de s'imposer à lui, mais comme une théorie déduite d'une pratique ... ce n'est pas la métrique qui a créé la poésie, mais la poésie qui a suggéré la métrique".[1]

This principle being established, we may turn now to the work of poetry itself.

It has been shown in a previous chapter [Chapter III, sect. 1] that a poem of C.A. in general acquires its unity from the repetitions which tie line to line. Thus, the metre and rhyme of the first line must be repeated throughout the poem. One may assume therefore that the first line which the poet makes determines the rest of the poem since it is the one that starts the series of rhythmical cycles which are repeated again and again until the poem is finished. In every line, as the pattern of rhythmical repetitions converges on word after word, the poet is led to hesitate and choose a word which will maintain them (i.e. the rhythmical repetitions). In his choice, he is guided by the constraints of a limited duration (hence, by a fixed number of syllables aggregated in a definite order), a definite rhyme scheme and by the movements of rise and fall produced by the metre and punctuated by the rhyme.

Parallel to this, the listener's expectation is led to respond; his past experience with the first verse has 'taught' him to measure the length and internal rhythm

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., pp. 229-230, fn. 4.

of that verse and, upon its conclusion, to expect each time a twin verse corresponding to it. In the following lines, we have a good example of how far this rhythmical correspondence is achieved in poetry [Vol. IV, p. 224, l. 1-3]:

1. 'nafasun yaħ-/'tattuhu:/ 'nafasu:

   - - -o -o -o - -o - - -o

   wadu'mu: ɛun /'laysataħ-/'tabisu:

2. wa ma'ɣa:nin /li-l-'kara: /'duturun

   - - -o -o - o - -o - - -o

   'ɛutulun min/'ɛah dihi:/ 'durusu:

3. 'ʃaharat ma:/'kuntu ʔak-/'tumuhu:

   - - -o -o -o - -o - - -o

   na:ti'qa: tun /bi-l-'hawa: / 'xurusu:[1]

   -o - -o -o

1. (with a sigh quickly followed by another and tears which could not be stopped,
2. [I stood there], in [those] effaced quarters, [the scenes of my past enjoyable] slumber, [which became] dry and desolate;
3. Those mute [creatures] spoke of my love and revealed what I tried to conceal.)

The preceding three lines are equal in their syllabic structure which corresponds to that of the truncated Madi:d metre:

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1. Note the differences in the patterns of stress from one hemistich to another, and see discussion further; where both hemistichs have the same structure, scansion is marked in between.

fa:ɛila:tun fa:ɛilun fa:ɛilun

-o - -o -o -o - -o -o - -o

in every hemistich. But in those lines, fa:ɛila:tun occurs only once in this form (line 3, the first unit of the second half) and is replaced elsewhere by faɛila:tun with a shortened first syllable. However, this change does not affect the metrical harmony between the lines since only one quiescent consonant-letter is lost and the units involved are keeping an equal number of moving consonant-letters. Similarly, the final unit of every hemistich occurs in the form faɛilun (---o), with a shortened first syllable.

With the present syllabic variations, the truncated Madi:d metre would normally exhibit the following pattern of rhythmical stress:

-(o) - '-o -o/'-o --o/'---o.

But if we consider this feature in the preceding lines, we shall notice once again the variations which they have with regard to the abstract model. Thus, while all the final units of every hemistich are stressed on the same syllable as the abstract model ('---o), two fa:ɛilun units out of six are stressed differently, namely:

li-l-kara: and bi-l-hawa:

- o '- -o - o '- -o ,

and three faɛila:tun out of six are stressed differently from the abstract model:

nafasun yaħ- , ɛutulun min- , ʃaharat ma:-

'- - -o -o '- - -o -o '- - -o -o .

All those variations are dictated by the grammar of the verse, and the stress pattern of every line is determined by the poet's choice of his words, phrases and sentence structures. In fact, as best as he can, the poet tries to select his words amongst the structures which coincide the most with the abstract model; but when there is a clash between grammar and the abstract model, it is grammar (i.e. the basic word-stress) which gets the priority over the model (e.g. li-l-'kara:, 'nafasun, 'xurusu:): the Arab poet is not allowed to fulfil the requirements of metre at the expense of his language; on the contrary, he must do that with his linguistic elements keeping their own expectations of phonological form.

As a result of those variations, the rhythm of verse acquires a new life and is saved from being a strictly mechanical regularity, based on obvious repetitions of the same pattern. In a sense, they represent a sort of 'way out' to the poet from the strict constraints of the metrical structure. But this freedom is not total, for one notes that the patterns of stress in every line quickly rejoin the basic abstract model as soon as the hemistich gets near the end, giving us a number of final units stressed on the same syllable. This fact justifies to a great extent the importance given by the Arabs to the final units of every metre, and particularly to the unit containing the rhyme-word which they call ḍarb [see this chapter, sect. 4].

The feeling of perfect rhythmical correspondence is particularly pronounced in those lines of A.T. where

his main purpose seems to be the achievement of certain euphonic effects. Here, the verse structure reveals a rhythmical movement which depends mainly on stylistic organization. Thus, in this line of the Ṭawi:l metre [Vol. IV, p. 586, l. 24]:

nuǰu:mun / ṭawa:liɛun / ǰiba:lun / fawa:riɛu:

-'-o -o -'-o - -o -'-o -o -'-o - -o

ɣuyu:tun / hawa:miɛun / suyu:lun / dawa:fiɛu:

(They are [like] ascending [shiny] stars, towering mountains, abundant rains [and] surging floods),[1]

we have an example of perfect rhythmical parallelism: the rhythm of the line follows the exact shape of the words and rhythmical stress coincides perfectly with word stress. This rhythmical parallelism, effectively supported by internal rhyme and syntactic parallelism, is further reinforced by the presence, in the two hemistichs, of the unit mafa:ɛilun (-'-o--o) instead of the normal mafa:ɛi:lun (--o'-o-o). With a verse like this one, the distinction between the theoretical model of the metre and its actual form in poetry disappears completely.

This is almost equally the case in the following line [Vol. I, p. 206, l. 25] (Ṭawi:l):

yamuddu:-/ na min ʔaydin / ɛawa:ṣin / ɛawa:ṣimin

- -o'-o - -o '-o -o -'-o -o -'-o - -o

taṣu:lu / bi-ʔas ya:fin / qawa:ḍin / qawa:ḍibi:

-'-o -

(They provide [help] with unsubmissive [but] protecting hands, which assault with deadly sharp swords.)

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1. The poet here is praising his people's great fame, their glory, generosity and force of numbers.

Here, only the first word of the line runs over the first unit (yamuddu:/na), leading to a change in the position of stress and providing thereby a variation on the basic rhythmical stress of faɛu:lun. The rest of the line, however, remains a perfect case of rhythmical parallelism, in which the metrical division follows the exact shape of words. This is accentuated at the end of every hemistich by a subtle recourse to alliteration and syllabic symmetry:

... ɛawa:sin ɛawa:simin

-'-o -o -'-o - ÷o

... qawa:din qawa:dibi:

In other cases, A.T.'s skilful search for stylistic wit combines perfectly with metre to provide his verse with special rhythmical effects. This is the case particularly in one line of his poem on the conquest of Ammorium [Vol. I, p. 58, l. 37]: (Basi:ṭ):

tadbi:ru muɛ-/tasimin / bi-l-la:hi mun-/taqimin

-o'-o - -o '- - -o - o '-o - -o '- - -o

li-l-la:hi mur-/taqibin/fi-l-la:hi mur-/taɣibi:

(... The contriving of one who clung to God,
who took revenge for God, who waited on God,
whose whole desire was [for God].)

This line exhibits an instance of stylistic 'craft' of rare subtlety; it is divided into four groups, each having a binary structure which runs parallel to the metrical division of the line:

tadbi:ru muɛtasimin

bi-l-la:hi muntaqimin

li-l-la:hi murtaqibin

fi-l-la:hi murtaɣibi:

- o '-o - -o'- - -o

mus tafɛi lunfaɛilun

One might think that scansion would destroy this harmony; but none of that happens. On the contrary, the rhythmical flow sustains it and ensures its continuity. At the same time, and parallel to it, another rhythm, born this time in the syntactic parallelism between the different members and supported by internal rhyme and morpho-phonological correspondence, seems to resist this metrical division thus creating a new set of 'rhythmical units':

tadbi:ru / muɛtasimin / bi-l-la:hi / muntaqimin

-o -o - -o - - -o - o -o - -o - - -o

li-l-la:hi / murtaqibin / fi-l-la:hi / murtaɣibi:

In this example, we have a good proof that the classical form of Arabic metres is far from being the monotonous one it is alleged by some to be. On the contrary, it is often rhythmically exciting as this example clearly shows. When one remembers that art, in the hands of a gifted poet like A.T., contrives its own devices to get out of dangerous situations, there will be no question of rigidity of form or monotony of rhythm. He will certainly find a way out to introduce in his poetry an element of music, a special music, rich and flowing, with varied tones strongly interwoven with the other levels of the poetic structure.

Another instance of how A.T. succeeds in providing

rhythmical variation to his metres is well illustrated by the following lines composed in the Wa:fir metre [Vol. I, pp. 283-284, lines 5-9]:

1. fa -tamma-l-ju:-/ du maʃdu:da-l-/ ʔawa:xi:
   - '-o - o '-o - -o'-o - o -'-o -o
   wa tamma-l-maj-/du madru:ba-l-/ qiba:bi:
2. wa ʔaxla:qun / kaʔanna-l-mis-/ka fi:ha:
   - -o'-o -o -'-o - o '-o - '-o -o
   bi-safwi-r-ra:-/ħiwa-n-nutafi-l-ɛida:bi:
   - '-o -o '-o - - o '- - - o
3. wa kam ʔaħyay-/ ta min dannin / rufa:tin
   - '-o -o'-o - -o '-o -o -'-o -o
   biha: waɛamar-/ta min ʔamalin / xara:bi:
   - -o - -'-o - -o '- - -o
4. yami:nu muħam-/madin baħrun / xidammun
   - '-o - -'-o - -o '-o -o -'-o -o
   tamu:ħu-l-maw-/ji maj nu:nu-l-/ ɛuba:bi:
   -'-o - o '-o
5. tafi:dusama:-/ħatan wa-l-muz-/nu mukdin
   -'-o - -'-o - -o - o '-o - '-o -o
   wa taqtaɛu wa-l-/ ħusa:mu-l-ɛad-/bu na:bi:
   - '-o - - - o -'-o - o '-o

1. (And there, the loops of generosity are fixed and the domes of glory set up;
2. And [there, you find] musky manners as though [mixed with] the limpidity of wine and the freshness of water;
3. Many is the time you have lent life to dead thoughts and restored ruined hopes;

4. Muhammad's right hand is a vast ocean [with] craving waves and mad floods;

5. It flows with magnanimity while the rain cloud is waterless, and cuts while the sharp sword is blunt.)

Here, we have a metre based on a three-unit hemistich (Wa:fir):

mufa:ɛalatun/mufa:ɛalatun/faɛu:lun

\- -o'- - -o - -o'- - -o -'-o -o

However, in the lines that we are dealing with, this theoretical model undergoes some changes in its syllabic arrangement as well as in its patterns of rhythmical stress, and in all cases, one notes that it is the basic word structure of the verse which prevails, i.e. all the words forming each line are pronounced normally, with no change in their phonological structure, although the units of the theoretical model are variations from the original.[1] One also notes that the unit mufa:ɛalatun (--o---o) in these lines has mostly occurred with two of its short syllables substituted for a long one, to become mafa:ɛi:lun (--o-o-o) which is encountered in almost 70% of the cases.[2] Bearing in mind that mafa:ɛi:lun constitutes the basic unit of the Hazaj metre (a metre of class A2) [see this chapter, sect. 1], the effect of its presence with units of the Wa:fir metre (a metre of class B2) will become evident. Although not necessarily the result of a deliberate choice

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1. See fn. 1, p. 254.

2. There are 14 mafa:ɛi:lun in these lines out of a total of 20. The six remaining units have the form mufa:ɛalatun.

by the poet, this feature appears to be quite effective in easing the poet of the rhythmical rigidity of one metre.

The same feature is encountered with poems in the Ka:mil metre where the change is often provided by recourse to another metre, Rajaz, and its basic unit mustafɛilun. This is particularly the case in the following line [Vol. II, p. 265, l. 15]:

fa-ṣani:ɛatun / tusda: wa xaṭ-/bun yuɛtala:
- -'-o - -o '-o -o - '-o -o '-o - -o
wa ɛaḍi:matun / tukfa: wa jur-/ ẖun yu:sa:
-o '-o -o

([Those lands are blessed by] the good deeds [which you] offer, the misfortunes [which you help people] to overcome, the calamities [which you] prevent and the wounds [which you] cure.)

Here, the normal unit of Ka:mil (mutafa:ɛilun) is replaced in three places by the basic unit of the Rajaz metre (mustafɛilun). One notes on the other hand that the second unit of every hemistich serves as a sort of 'hinge' which takes the rhythmical movement from the second to its third and final unit. As a result, the rhythm of this line is smooth and flowing as compared to the following one, built on the same metrical structure but characterized by a noticeable abruptness [Vol. II, p. 417, l. 22]:

fi: maṭlabin / ʔaw mahrabin / ʔaw raybatin
-o '-o - -o -o '-o - -o -o '-o - -o
ʔaw rahbatin / ʔaw mawkibin / ʔaw faylaqi:

([This noble mount takes you] for a quest, a flight or a desire, [away from] fear, [in] a cortege, or [in] an army corps.)

Here again, the Rajaz basic unit (-o'-o--o) replaces al-Ka:mil's (--'-o--o) throughout the line. The adjustment of the words to the different metrical units is total. The set of junctures marking the end of grammatical units (six coordinated prepositional phrases) cooperates with those produced by the phonological units of line measurement (number of syllables, metrical units, stresses, internal rhyme) to produce the abrupt periodicity peculiar to its rhythm.

To go back to the previous example, one may also note that its metre is accompanied by another rhythm inherent in the syntactic and phonological parallelism relating its four sentences together. But the set of grammatical junctures in this case does not coincide with those produced by metrical division. The result is a successful instance of 'counterpoint', of tension between the metre, wanting to make a break, and the grammar, wanting to be continuous:

fa-ṣani:ɛatun ¦ tusda: | wa xaṭ ¦ bun yuɛtala:
wa ɛaḍi:matun ¦ tukfa: | wa jur ¦ ħun yu:sa:[1]

Of a similar effect is the following line in which A.T. is praising one of the Caliph's army commanders [Vol. II, p. 326, l. 24] (Ṭawi:l):

yaqu:lu / fa-yusmiɛu / wa yamʃi: / fa-yusriɛu
-'-o - - '-o - - - '-o -o - '-o - -
wayaḍri-/bufi:da:ti-l-/ʔila:hi / fa-yu:jiɛu
-'-o - - -o'-o - o - '-o - - '-o - -

1. The dotted lines mark the metrical divisions, while the bold line marks the syntactic ones.

(His word is heard, his movements purposive
and his fervour for God strong.)[1]

The first hemistich is made up of two syntactically parallel sentences whose different components correspond totally with the metrical division. Again, we have an instance of counterpoint in which grammatical boundaries coincide with metrical junctures and both are reinforced by internal rhyme (fa-yusmiɛu / faɣusriɛu). However, the metrical structure in this hemistich exhibits some variations in relation to the theoretical model (T.M.) of Ṭawi:l:

T.M. faɛu:lu(n) mafa:ɛi(:)lu(n) faɛu:lun mafa:ɛilu(n)[2]

\- -o - o - -o - o - o - -o -o - -o - - o

yaqu:lu faɣusmi- ɛu waɣamʃi: faɣusriɛu

To make up for those syllabic changes, a pause (i.e. a moment of silence)[3] intervenes at the end of every unit and, in this way, reinforces both the rhythm and the meaning of the hemistich:

yaqu:luˆ fa-yusmiɛuˆ wa yamʃi:ˆ fa-yusriɛuˆ

\- -o -o - -o - -o - -o -o - -o - -o

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1. Literally translated, this line would be rendered as follows: (He is heard when he says [something], he is fast when he goes [after his aims], and he hurts when he punishes for the sake of God.)

2. The items between brackets are those missing in the actual performance of the theoretical model. Note, once more, that these changes affect only the quiescent elements of every unit, while the moving consonant-letters keep an unchanged number. Note also that the final unit of the Ṭawi:l metre (mafa:ɛi:lun) generally occurs, in every hemistich, in the form mafa:ɛilun, with a shortened penultimate syllable which changes the position of stress one syllable back.

3. Represented here by the symbol ˆ.

The traditional prosodists (who considered the pause just at the hemistich and line-boundaries, but not within the line) noticed how different the syllabic structure of this hemistich is with respect to the theoretical model. Encouraged by the presence of internal rhyme, and to avoid this difficulty, they concluded by establishing the necessity of lengthening the final vowels of yusmiɛu and yusriɛu so that the lost duration is compensated for, treating them just like rhyme-words.[1] They admit however that this is a rare case of poetic licence.[2] Had they thought of the possibility of having a pause with a specific function within the line - and not only at the hemistich and line-boundaries - this far-fetched licence would have been unnecessary, especially because it affects the normal phonological form of the words involved. It is unfortunate that we have no idea on how the line of poetry was recited during A.T.'s age, but it appears that its syntactic, phonological and semantic organization, in this case, requires at least a minor pause at the end of every unit, in the first half. In fact, it is quite possible to say that A.T. was fully aware of this when he built his verse in this way. This pause sustains the rhythm by compensating for the syllabic unbalance between some units, emphasizes the presence of parallelism (both syntactic and phonological) between:

/yaqu:lu fa-yusmiɛu/ and /yamʃi: fa-yusriɛu/,

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1. It is a convention that the final vowel of the rhyme-word is lengthened so that it corresponds to the final quiescent of the metrical unit.

2. See comments on this line, related to this matter, in A.T.'s poetry, Vol. II, pp. 326-327.

and strengthens the semantic link between their different components. The result is an additional instance of counterpoint, an independent movement of two rhythms: one inherent in the grammar and the other in the metre.

As one reaches the second hemistich, this pattern is disturbed:

wa yadri-/ bu fi: da:ti-l-/ ʔila:hi^ / fa-yu:jɪɛu^

\- -o - - -o -o - o - -o -o - -o - -o

(... and his fervour for God [is] strong.)

The deviation here is not from Arabic verse conventions (for even the few syllabic variations which we have are common with this metre), but rather from this correspondence which the poet has established in the first half between 'prose rhythm' and the metrical structure. Thus, we no longer have this coincidence of grammatical and metrical units or the internal rhyme which accentuates it. It seems that a continuous symmetry of this kind is difficult to produce; we have seen above the role which the pause must play to make it possible and, above all, to keep the rhythm of the verse flowing. In addition, such a regularity may become dull. Consequently, the pattern which the reader or listener has been conditioned to expect is disturbed in the second hemistich; one should say, rather, that it is gently stretched so that a slight degree of variation is introduced. By the time we reach the rhyme-word, the counterpoint effect of the first half reappears, again supported by the grammatical unit (fa-yu:jɪɛu) and the metrical one (mafa:ɛilun). As in the first half, this unit is preceded and followed by a pause which sustains the rhythm and reinforces the syntactic, semantic and phonological

relationship between the different components of the poetic utterance.

This discussion of 'counterpoint' and coincidence of grammatical and metrical units in A.T.'s poetry brings up another one related to metre and the grammatical organization of his verse. The lines discussed so far have been mostly characterized by verbal parallelism which coincides with the typical bipartite division of the single verse in Arabic. In addition, none of them has been noticed to cut across the line divisions. This is because A.T., in his work, has generally complied with the 'no-enjambment' rule which was widely upheld by the critics. Indeed, enjambment (tadmi:n) was generally proscribed in C.A. poetry, and the formal independence of individual verses was one of the basic rules in literary criticism. Thus, to Ibn Khaldu:n: "each verse with its combination of words is by itself a meaningful unit. In a way, it is a statement by itself and independent of what precedes and what follows."[1]

Ibn Raʃi:q, in turn, repeatedly upheld this opinion, asserting that enjambment is counted as a defect in the composition of poetry because it makes impossible the customary pausal pronunciation, essential at the end of every line. For this reason, he believes, the further the word producing enjambment is from the rhyme-word, the less enjambment is to be blamed.[2]

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1. Ibn Khaldu:n: the "Muqaddimah", Vol. III, p. 373, quoted by V. Cantarino: op.cit., p. 52.

2. Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., pp. 164, 171, 261-262.

Quda:ma equally condemned enjambment since, in his opinion, it leaves the content of individual verses incomplete or 'mutilated' (mabtu:r).[1]

Some Arab scholars even seem to have felt it best for the two hemistichs to be syntactically as independent of each other as possible; accordingly, Taɛlab singles out what he calls ʔabya:t muɛaddalah (i.e. verses with independent hemistichs) for special praise because "the meaning is complete, whichever [hemistich] one reads", while he apparently criticizes the ʔabya:t murajjalah because the meaning of such verses "is complete only through their end, and no expression can be separated from the rest [in such a way that] it is appropriate to stop anywhere except at the rhyme-syllable".[2] It is in relation to this concept that devices like taṣri:ɛ (i.e. rhyming hemistichs), muwa:zanah (i.e. balance), taʃṭi:r (lit. the division of the line into two equal halves), muqa:balah (i.e. parallel) and the like were developed in poetry, and verses displaying such devices were regarded as the most perfect. The fact remains however that this rule has been more strictly observed between the different lines of the poem rather than between the hemistichs, although we have seen how A.T., in search for stylistic wit, has often applied it in both.

A.T. has generally complied with the no-enjambment rule and it is rare to find any 'run-on' lines in his

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1. Quda:ma: op.cit., p. 140.

2. Taɛlab: "Qawa:ɛidu-ʃ-ʃiɛr", pp. 70 and ff.; also p. 88; translated and quoted by Scheindlin: op.cit., pp. 44-45.

verse. Even in the case of sentences going on for many lines (.e.g. lines 1 - 5 discussed above, pp.285 - 287)[1], with a series of parallel subordinate clauses, or sentences dependent on previous or subsequent lines for completeness, one notes that it is often possible to cut them off at any rhyme-word, leaving in every case a complete sentence or, at least, a full clause. Thus, in the following lines [Vol. I, p. 418, l. 36-38]:

1. wa ʔida: raʔayta ʔaba: yazi:din fi: nadan
   wa waɣan wa mubdiʔa ɣa:ratin wa muɛi:da: ,
2. yaqra: murajji:hi muʃa:ʃata ma:lihi
   wa ʃaba-l-ʔasinnati tuɣratan wa wari:da: ,
3. ʔayqanta ʔanna mina-s-sama:ħi ʃaja:ɛatan
   tudmi: wa ʔanna mina-ʃ-ʃaja:ɛati ju:da: .

1. (When you see Aba: Zayd in [the process of] giving and fighting, launching attack after attack,
2. giving all his money to [the needy man] who puts his hopes in him, and spearhead points to the throat and veins [of his enemies],[2]
3. [Then] you will know for certain that to be brave is to be generous [with one's life] and that it [needs] courage to be openhanded.)

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1. For other interesting examples see A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, pp. 210-211, l. 31-33; pp. 207-208, l. 27-28; p. 224, l. 16-18; Vol. II, pp. 84-85, l. 16-17; pp. 168-169, l. 11-12; p. 347, l. 18-19; etc.

2. Literally, line 2 would be rendered as follows (giving the marrow of his money to [the needy man] who puts his hopes in him, and spearhead points to the throat and jugular veins [of his enemies]).

Although the main clause comes only in line 3, at a noticeable distance from the first subordinate clause introduced by ʔiḍa: (i.e. when) in line 1, the grammatical organization is such that each line is occupied by one clause, and it remains possible to cut the clauses off at every rhyme-word, leaving in every case a full clause. This helps to safeguard the rhythmical integrity of every line by allowing for a metrical pause at each line-boundary, although one cannot consider them as syntactically independent from each other. One may compare enjambment in these lines with a much quoted case of the same feature as it appeared in a poem by the pre-Islamic poet al-Naːbiɣah in the praise of his tribe:

1. wahum waradu-l-jifaːra ɛalaː Tamiːmin
   wahum ʔasẖaːbu yawmi ɛukaːḍa; ʔinniː
2. ʃahidtu lahum mawaːṭina saːliẖaːṭin[1]
   etc. ...

1. (They conquered Tamim's watering-place of Jifar
   and were the victors on the day of ɛukaːḍ; I [certainly]
2. bear witness of their [many] praiseworthy virtues ... etc.)

The rhyme-word in line 1 (ʔinniː, an intensifying particle) is an important grammatical particle introducing a nominal sentence which occupies the whole of line 2; it establishes therefore a strong syntactic link between the two

1. Ibn Raʃiːq: op.cit., Vol. I, p. 171; also quoted by J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 150.

lines. As such, ʔinni: is unable to assume at the same time its conclusive function as a rhyme-word since a pause at the line-boundary is impossible in this case, a fact which destroys the rhythmical parallelism between the two lines. This is why enjambment is not tolerated here, and it is the more so because the word provoking it (i.e. ʔinni:) occurs at the very end of the verse. In A.T.'s lines quoted earlier, on the other hand, the word provoking enjambment (i.e. ʔida:) occurs away from the rhyme, at the very beginning of line 1, and thus makes it possible to separate each line from the other without affecting its grammatical organization. The fact remains, however, that the meaning of those lines is complete only by the end of line 3.

Many Western scholars have repeatedly emphasized the independence of the single verse in C.A. poetry, but, as J. Ben Cheikh puts it: "Le vers Arabe n'est pas indépendant parce-qu'il n'a aucun lien avec le suivant, mais parce-qu'il peut se détacher de lui sans subir de mutilation, ce qui est fort différent."[1] With regard to A.T., although the proportion of 'end-stopped' lines is by far the highest in his poetry, 'run-on' lines of the type just discussed here remain quite profuse. However, it is important to add that even those apparently independent lines are not completely so, for they all are related to each other in one way or another (e.g. in their theme,

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 152.

in their grammatical and/or phonological organization, etc.). The most obvious of those links which still remains to be studied here is the single rhyme scheme, and it will be the object of our discussion in the following section of this chapter.

IV. Rhyme: An Instrument of Phono-semantic Cohesion in A.T.'s Poetry

1. The rhythmical function of rhyme in the two-hemistich form

Compared with metres which introduce relatively little strain on the normal patterns of Arabic, the rules of rhyme (qa:fiyah) serve to supply further complication to the poet. Indeed, every line of the poem should end with the same rhyme which is announced at the first hemistich of the first line, in what is traditionally known as the taṣri:ε scheme.

Rhyme, being nothing but a repetition of identical or closely similar sounds, may well be regarded as a phonological scheme of the same status as alliteration, assonance and the like. One may therefore ask why it is being studied here in connection with metre and not with the other sound schemes examined earlier, when dealing with phonological parallelism in A.T.'s poetry. This is because rhyme seems to be a necessary adjunct of the two-hemistich form of C.A. verse, and the strict division of this verse into equal rhythmical units needs the support of a recurrent final 'note' which binds them together and

gives strength to their symmetry. It has been seen earlier that the different metrical models can rarely be strictly followed in the actual composition of poetry, and that a continuous attachment to the strict rules of metre may become dull and transform poetry into a mechanical lifeless movement; hence the need every now and then for variations and interruptions (e.g. missing syllables, shifted stress positions, etc.). Now, rhyme is the factor which restores the rhythm distorted by those interruptions. It is not simply a sound scheme from which musical pleasure may be derived, but it also has, as H. Lanz puts it, "an organizing function in the metrical composition of the verse. It helps us to recognize the end of a metrical period by beating its melodious drum".[1] B. Tomachevsky, in turn, expresses the same view when he says:

> "La rime n'est pas un ornement sonore du vers, mais un facteur organisateur du mètre. Elle sert non seulement à créer l'impression d'analogie entre les sons qui la constituent, mais aussi à diviser le discours en vers dont elle note la fin." 2

This statement comes very much in accordance with the traditional Arab view that rhyme should contribute to the feeling of finality produced in every verse at the end of the metrical cycle and, therefore, must be protected against any danger (enjambment, for instance) which might

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1. H. Lanz: "The physical basis of rime", p. 235.

2. B. Tomachevsky: "Sur le vers" in "Théorie de la littérature: textes des formalistes Russes", collected and translated by T. Todorov, pp. 159-160.

threaten that feeling. It should also be followed by a metrical pause which accentuates the completion of the metrical cycle.[1] The way this function is achieved in A.T.'s poetry is well illustrated by the following lines speaking of the devastation of Ammorium after the conquest [Vol. I, pp. 56-57, l. 32-34]:

1. ma: rabɛu May-/yata maɛ-/mu:ran yuti:-/fu bihi:
   '-o -o - '-o - - -o '-o -o -'-o - - -o
   ɣay la: nu ʔab-/ha: ruban/min rab ɛiha-l-/xaribi:
   -o '-o - '-o -o '- -o -o '-o - - o '- - -o

2. wa la-l-xudu:-/ du wa qad / ʔudmi:na min / xajalin
   - - o -'-o - - -o -o'-o - -o '- - -o
   ʔaʃha: ʔila: / na:d̲irin / min xaddiha-t-/taribi:
   '-o -o - -o '-o - -o -o '-o - - o '- - -o

3. sama:jatun / ɣaniyat / minna-l-ɛuyu:-/nu biha:
   -'-o - -o '- - -o '-o - o -'-o - - -o
   ɛan kulli ħus-/nin bada: /ʔaw man d̲arin / ɛajabi:
   -o -o - '-o -o '- -o -o '-o - -o '- - -o[2]

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1. See the discussion of the Arab view with regard to 'enjambment' and its relation to rhyme [this chap. sect. 3, pp. 292-7; see also chap. III, sect. 1, p. 109-10].

2. Note in these lines the position of stress changing from one unit to another. Thus some units have two stresses, others have none (e.g. line 1) and a third group bear the stress on the last syllable (e.g. the first unit of line 2), etc. In all those cases, we are dealing with grammatical units split up by metrical boundaries (i.e. they do not correspond with the metrical units) or with grammatical units which combine together to form one metrical unit; and in doing so, they all keep their own pattern of stress. Hence, those variations on the basic rhythmical stress of the metre. In a way, the poet has made a 'redistribution' of the stresses in relation to the grammar of his verse. As shown in sect. 3 above, it is the grammar of the line which gets the priority over the abstract metrical model, and the poet is required to make his linguistic elements fit into this model without them losing any of their basic phonological properties.

1. (The thronged quarter of Maiya[1] circled by Ghailan is not more lovely as to [its] hillocks than the devastated quarter of her;
2. Neither are the cheeks [of lovely maidens] suffused with blood out of shyness more delectable to the beholder than her dust-stained cheek;
3. An ugliness by which our eyes are sufficed [so that they do not crave for any sort of] visible beauty or marvellous sight.)[2]

Here, the abstract model of the Basi:t metre:

mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun mustafɛilun fa:ɛilun

-o'-o - -o '-o - -o -o'-o - -o '-o - -o

undergoes various changes in its syllabic structure as well as in its patterns of rhythmical stress [see scansion above]. But, as may easily be noticed, as each verse approaches the end, we have a series of final units of the same syllabic quantity, bearing the stress on the same syllable:

xaribi: / taribi: / ɛajabi:

'- - -o '- - -o '- - -o .

Those are the rhyme-words and one can see how effective they are (owing to those phonological similarities) in regulating the rhythm and straightening out the distortions

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1. Maiya is the beloved of the poet Ghailan (Du-l-Rummah, D. 725 A.D.) who is renowned for his profuse romantic description of her quarters.

2. The translation, apart from the change of tense from past to present (lines 1 and 2), is the work of A.J. Arberry: op.cit., pp. 54-57.

which it underwent in the middle of every verse. In fact, the poem on Ammorium from which those lines have been selected counts 71 verses whose rhyme-words may be allocated under the following categories: 55 substantive nouns in the singular or plural, 7 participles, 4 adjectives and 5 verbs governed by the negative particle lam. All adjectives and nouns are of the type fuɛuli, fuɛali, faɛali, faɛili and fiɛali[1] which all have the same syllabic quantity and thus, are stressed on the same syllable. Add to those vocalic variations the alternation of consonants: r/b in the second and third radicals, or in the first and third (encountered 16 times), the alternation t/b (encountered 5 times) and the cases of identical radicals differentiated only by their vocalic context,[2] and one will easily realize the importance of rhyme as a device for keeping rhythm within a poem. This importance of rhyme is the more increased by its position at the end of the metrical cycle, just preceding a pause, a position which adds rhythmical prominence to its musical value.

Examples illustrating the same regulating effect of rhyme may easily be found in A.T.'s poetry. Thus, in his poem no. 20, counting 42 lines [Vol. I, pp. 264-276; munsariħ metre], the majority of rhyme-words are of the type faɛalih (24 cases), faɛilih (4 cases), fuɛalih (5 cases)

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1. It is obvious here that I am not only considering 'rhyme' as the individual sound sequence common to the end of succeeding verse lines, but also and mainly the rhyme-word as a whole. The reasons behind this will appear further on in this chapter.

2. The present census has been made by J. Ben Cheikh: op. cit., p. 173.

and fuʕulih (2 cases). As may be noticed here, a personal pronoun (-h, 3rd pers. masc. sing. possessive), though unable to form the rhyme on its own, is suffixed to the different rhyme-words (ending all with -bi) thus supporting their phonological correspondence and reinforcing the relationship of each rhyme-word with the rest of the verse or even with a sequence of verses. In this way, four elements contribute here to defining the specific character of rhyme, namely: an identical final consonant with the same case-ending (-bi-), an identical syllabic quantity (rhyme-words with similar morphological structures, thus referring to similar semantic categories) and a suffixed personal pronoun (-h) which relates each rhyme-word to its verse or to a series of other verses.

In his poem no. 129, counting 60 lines [Vol. III, pp. 112-131, Ṭawi:l metre], 27 rhyme-words have the structure fa:ʕilu, while the majority of the others have similar forms of 'broken' plural (e.g. fawa:ʕilu: 7 cases; faʕa:ʔilu: 9 cases; faʕa:lilu: 4 cases; mafa:ʕilu: 8 cases; ʔafa:ʕilu: 1 case). The regular recurrence in the rhyme of such characteristic word structures is reinforced by the similarities between some radicals.[1] In

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1. e.g. xa:milu / xama:ʔilu / xala:xilu (i.e. unknown / places with luxuriant tree growth / anklets);
xa:milu / Ja:milu (i.e. unknown / a herd of camels);
sa:ħilu / sa:ʔilu / wasa:ʔilu (i.e. seashore / a petitioner / the means);
ħawa:filu / maħa:filu (i.e. plentiful / congregations); etc. etc.
The first ten lines of this poem have been discussed earlier [Chap. IV, sect. 3, p.216-223] and this feature has been briefly pointed out.

fact, all this reflects the poet's tendency to relate his rhymes to specific morphological archetypes, thus introducing an additional element of structure in his poem and bringing to the foreground the final word of every verse.

A.T. may also use verbal forms as rhyme-words. J. Ben Cheikh calls our attention to his poem no. 27 [Vol. I, pp. 299-308], where 39 lines out of 44 end with a verb in the 3rd person fem. sing. As a result, the structure of the poem is characterized by a large number of verbal structures:

verses with no verb: 1
verses with 1 verb: 3
verses with 2 verbs: 12
verses with 3 verbs: 23
verses with 4 verbs: 4
verses with 5 verbs: 1.[1]

On the other hand, over half the rhyme-verbs are coordinated to the rest of the verse by either wa or fa, a fact which necessitates the selection of particular sentence structures which permit this combination in every line and invite it, hence the predomination noted above of verbal structures. In other cases, where the poet uses different types of compound sentences, the rhyme-verbs are introduced by ʔiḍa: or ʔiḍa:ma: (i.e. when, if), or by lamma: (i.e. when), therefore adding a further correspondence to the one already existing between them (they all are in the perfect, and end with the suffixed personal pronoun, 3rd pers. fem. sing.).

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., pp. 175-176.

The examples just discussed illustrate the ways in which rhyme is used by the poet to reestablish the rhythmical flow in the verse and help to keep up the impression of equality between the lines. It is therefore not merely a constraint by which the traditional Arab poets had to abide for generations, but also an effective element of verse form which attracts our attention both melodically and rhythmically, and "counts our steps"[1] from one line to another, helping us to appreciate the regularity of metre. It also has its effect on the syntactic organization of the verse.

2. The constraining effect of monorhyme

The Arab scholars seem to have acknowledged the importance of rhyme when they said that "rhyme is metre's companion in characterizing poetry, for it is not called poetry until it has both metre and rhyme",[2] or when they defined poetry as a 'rhythmic and rhymed discourse'. However, one can hardly understand why no serious analyses of the function of rhyme can be found in their works, apart from those normative rules related to the way rhyme is to be used by the poet. Some of them noted particularly the different attempts to restrain the compelling power of monorhyme[3] and, occasionally, mentioned how certain metrical forms (the Rajaz metre, for instance) tend to promote

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1. Expression used by H. Lanz: op.cit., p. 235.

2. Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, p. 151, translated in Cantarino: op.cit., p. 45.

3. For examples of those different attempts on rhyme, see for instance Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 172-186.

the use of particular rhyme schemes encountered in such poetic forms as the couplet, the quartet, the muxammas (i.e. the pentametre) and the like. They were aware of the lexical and morphological constraints which limit the practice of monorhyme. Nevertheless, they praised the poets who clung to it despite the difficulties and discussed the techniques which are used to produce the most brilliant masterpieces with single rhyme schemes.

In this connection, it is worthwhile to mention briefly some of the difficulties which the poet faces due to the restrictive practice of monorhyme. His first task is to deal with the lexicon whose resources are often decisive at this stage of poetic creation. One need only recall that the number of words ending with the particular consonant chosen for the rhyme is limited. He must therefore avoid those final consonants which are rarely used in the lexicon and, although certain poets tried to ignore this difficulty and produce poems with rare rhymes,[1] one may easily notice the predominance in the rhyme of a certain number of consonants. Once again, J. Ben Cheikh[2] provides us with a statistical account of this in relation to A.T.'s poetry, to the work of his contemporary al-Buḥturi:, to the anthology which he compiled (Al-Hama:sah) and to "al-ʃiɛr wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ" of Ibn Qutayba and al-ʔaγa:ni:

1. One of them is the poet al-Buḥturi:, the contemporary of A.T.; an anecdote on this matter is reported by al-Ṣuli: "ʔaxba:ru-l-Buḥturi:", no. 69, pp. 121-122. A.T. is also one who 'defied' this constraint and composed a number of poems in rarely used rhymes [see Chap. II, sect.1 p.p.77-79].

2. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., pp. 169-171.

of al- Iṣfaha:ni:, in which a good deal of C.A. verse of different ages has been compiled:

Rhyme	No. of poems	%
b—rhyme	72	17%
m-rhyme	63	15%
r-rhyme	58	14%
d-rhyme	58	14%
l-rhyme	48	11%
n-rhyme	29	7%
TOTAL	328	78%

(1) A.T.'s production

Rhyme	No. of poems	%	No. of verses
d-rhyme	133	14%	2433
l-rhyme	120	13%	2194
b-rhyme	114	12%	2093
r-rhyme	113	12%	2011
n-rhyme	100	11%	1701
m-rhyme	62	6.5%	1382
TOTAL	642	68.5%	11814

(2) The 3/4 of al-Buḥturi's production

Rhyme	al-ħama:sah	K. al-ʃiɛr
r-rhyme	145	260
l-rhyme	137	237
d-rhyme	116	165
m-rhyme	108	165
b-rhyme	82	152
n-rhyme	55	121

643 pieces out of 881

(3) Al-ħama:sah and al-ʃiɛr wa-ʃ-ʃuɛara:ʔ

Rhyme	al-ʔaγa:ni:
r-rhyme	1602
l-rhyme	1342
b-rhyme	1132
m-rhyme	1065
d-rhyme	1052
n-rhyme	889

(4) Kita:bu-l-ʔaγa:ni:

The above tables show the significant predominance in the rhyme of a group of consonants whose order of frequency varies from one poet to another and from one collection of poetry to the other, while the group itself remains constant. Thus, the poet has at his disposal a certain range of possibilities formed by the variety of morphological combinations permissible in his language. From this point of view, A.T. does not appear

to be different from his disciples or contemporaries; a quick comparison between the above tables will show that, in the selection of his rhymes, he is bound by the same lexical and morphological limitations of C.A. Accordingly, one will find it easy to estimate on this basis the number of possible rhyme-words available to the poet and, at the same time, understand how the length of a given poem depends to a great extent on the amount of words which he may use in the rhyme. His knowledge of vocabulary must therefore play a crucial part in these respects and we have seen previously how A.T.'s solid linguistic education has made a specialist of him in this domain [see Chapter I, p.26-32 and Chapter II,p.70 ff.]. On the other hand, his acquaintance with the works of his predecessors has provided him with a wide selection of words used in the rhyme, with a perfect view of how they are to be dealt with and the type of structures in which they may occur.

In addition to this constraint, every rhyme-word must be given a specific syntactic function in the verse structure and the poet should consider this carefully throughout his act of creation. Thus, rhyme has to take account of the inflection of the rhyme-word in the sense that it includes one of the vowel endings peculiar to the different grammatical cases of Arabic. In what follows, we have a statistical account of this feature made by J. Ben Cheikh on the works of A.T., al-Buḥturi: and al-ʔaγa:ni:, and limited to the group of the major rhyme-consonants which were the object of the preceding tables:[1]

1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 172.

case endings	A.T.		al-Buħturi:		al-ʔaγa:ni:	
i:	167	51%	347	55%	3193	46%
u:	107	32.5%	173	27.5%	2096	29.5%
a:	48	14.5%	94	14.5%	1443	20%
suku:n (quiescence)	6	2%	19	3%	350	4.5%
	328 pieces		633 pieces		7082 extracts	

Comparing the above figures, one may draw the following conclusions: the fact that the /i:/ and /a:/ endings represent between 65% and 70% of the total means that the Arab poet generally respects the classical organization of the sentence ending with complement noun-phrases. Even the appearance of /u:/ endings in the rhyme does not overrule this fact since it often occurs that the poet is led to delay his subject noun-phrases until the end of his sentences. On the other hand, the rhyme-words ending with /u:/ are often represented by a verb which takes a statement over again to emphasize it, or simply repeat an idea presented in the beginning of the line. The verb in this case is in the imperfect. As for the suku:n endings, they are the result of words whose normal case ending (i:, a: or u:) is dropped and a suku:n symbol is substituted for it (e.g. γuru:b, i.e. sunset; maji:ʔ, i.e. arrival), as before a pause.

To sum up, one should note that monorhyme seems to have made little strain on the language of the Arab poet. The verbal organization of each single verse in

A.T.'s poetry, in particular, hardly differs from that of normal Arabic prose. In this respect, the extreme 'classicism' of his themes and topics corresponds to an equally extreme classicism in his language and one may well understand why some philologists have used his poetry as a corpus for their linguistic teachings. Of course, the constraints of rhyme and verse form might lead him sometimes to make shifts in word-order which are unusual or limited in prose; but those changes, on the whole, are not harsh or repugnant in the general structure of Arabic, nor are they as monotonous to the Arabs as readers of English might expect because of the length of the line. In fact, we have seen previously how A.T. often relies on his skill to find a way out of those formal traps. The cases discussed above of the morphological archetypes which he tends to select as rhyme-words [see this section, pp. 301 - 303] do not represent an additional constraint which he imposes on himself, as one might think at first, but rather a device which helps him to overcome the difficulty of monorhyme by providing him with strongly represented paradigms. In this way, his rhymes acquire a particular standing and reinforce parallelism in his poetry.

These aspects of rhyme brought to light, one may turn now to the ways A.T. reinforces the sound structure of his verse, varies its combinations and makes of the rhyme the culmination of an organization which one cannot penetrate without understanding clearly its function in the structure of the verse.

3. The function of rhyme in verse structure

Rhyme is not merely an element of decoration but a solidly built component of C.A. poems, which carries a specific meaning and operates at all the levels of the poetic structure. Its real function, therefore, may not be studied if one does not relate it to meaning. In this connection, J. Cohen says:

> "La vérité est que la rime n'est pas un instrument, un moyen subordonné à autre chose. Elle est un facteur indépendant, une figure qui s'ajoute aux autres. Et comme les autres, sa véritable fonction n'apparait que si on la met en relation avec le sens." 1

Consequently, it is not to be considered just as 'rhyme' but as a 'signifier' involved in the semantic structure of the verse, thus as part of a 'rhyme-word'.

When the poet selects a specific rhyme as a fixed element in all the poem, all the words ending with the radical which he chose to be his rhyme constitute a group of virtual rhyme-words. The choice of a final assonance is an additional string which links together the different morphological combinations which repeat it line after line. This is even more obvious when his choice falls on a specific morpho-semantic paradigm. In this way, the rhyme-word may be identified on two distinct but complementary levels: lexically, by its meaning and its form, including its rhythm and its sound properties;

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1. J. Cohen: "Structure du Langage Poétique", p. 78; also quoted by J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 176.

and phonologically, by the role which it plays in reinforcing the sound correspondences within the poem. It is in relation to those two levels that the function of rhyme in A.T.'s poetry will be assessed in what follows. We shall see how A.T., far from trying to reject the norms of the classical system, will attempt to carry them through, thus imposing the supremacy of the 'baroque' style.

In A.T.'s poetry, rhyme manifests its presence at a first stage in the beginning of his poems, when it links together the two hemistichs of the first line. This is a common practice in C.A. poetry where the first line of the poem usually exhibits a tasri:ε scheme or 'median rhyme'. It may also occur in different lines of one poem, and some Arab scholars assert that it is used there by the poet to announce a change of theme in his poem.[1] But with A.T. and the poets of his generation, this device has become an additional way of showing verbal excellency. It is in fact not easy to practise 'median rhyme'. It requires the autonomy, both syntactically and semantically, of the two hemistichs. This autonomy is marked by a metrical pause which should coincide with a syntactic pause and both are preceded by an identical rhyme-scheme. We have seen earlier [this chapter, sect.3, p. 293] how some Arab scholars tend to prefer this kind of verses because of their vigorous structure, which reflects

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1. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 179.

a perfect rhythmical balance accentuated by a median pause of the same weight as the one occurring at the end of the verse. This is for instance the case in the introductory line of one of A.T.'s elegies [Vol. IV, p. 89, l. 1]:

> ʔayyu-l-qulu:bi ɛalaykum laysa yanṣadiɛu:?
> wa ʔayyu nawmin ɛalaykum laysa yamtaniɛu?
> (How can anyone's heart be unshattered by your [death]? and how can anyone's sleep remain undisturbed?)

But this is not always possible, for it necessitates the division of the line into two extremely brief statements and makes it difficult for the poet to express a clear and continuous thought.[1] And since the practice of any stylistic device should not lead to the dislocation of meaning in the line, the practice of median rhyme by A.T. has been mostly limited to the beginning of his poems,[2] where it announces the rhyme scheme to be expected throughout.

Internal rhyme (i.e. within the hemistich) may also constitute the basis for additional formal correspondences in A.T.'s poetry. We have discussed earlier [see Chapter IV and also Chapter V, sect. 3] how the poet often divides his verse into small parts, each occupying a hemistich at most, or a word at least. In this process,

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1. The space in one hemistich is so restricted that, sometimes, a word is divided between the two halves.

2. Many beginnings of his poems fail to do so, however; e.g. Vol. I, p. 174, l. 1; p. 282, l. 1; p. 340, l. 1, etc.

the pre-selected rhyme scheme constitutes the ultimate end to which the different members of the parallel structures lead one by one. Thus, this line quoted above [this Chapter, sect. 3, p.288]:

yaqu:lu fa-yusmiɛu, wa yamʃi: fa-yusriɛu ,
wa yadribu fi: da:ti-l-ʔila:hi fa-yu:jiɛu ;

(His word is heard, his movements purposive,
and his fervour for God strong),

is all built on a scheme whose basic element is the rhyme. It is divided into three parts, each one ending with a verb rhyming with another one which occurs at the end of the other two. The three verbs (yusmiɛu, yusriɛu and yu:jiɛu) are syntactically and morpho-phonologically parallel, and internal rhyme comes to reinforce this correspondence between them.

In the following line, also discussed earlier [this chapter, sect. 3, p.282], we have a more complex example of this feature:

nuju:mun ṭawa:liɛu, jiba:lun fawa:riɛu ,
ɣuyu:ṭun hawa:miɛu, suyu:lun dawa:fiɛu .

([They are like] ascending [shiny] stars,
towering mountains, abundant rains [and]
surging floods.)

Here, the words related by internal rhyme (i.e. ṭawa:liɛu, fawa:riɛu, hawa:miɛu, dawa:fiɛu) are further related by syntactic and morpho-phonological parallelism: they are four adjectives of the same morpho-phonological structure (CaCa:CiCu) qualifying four nouns which are equally related by phonological correspondence (nuju:mun,

jiba:lun,[1] ɣuyu:tun, suyu:lun). All this contributes to the rhythmical flow of the line, and the sequence of parallel structures seems to rotate around the final rhyme-word (i.e. dawa:fiɛu) which exerts its influence by 'directing' the selection of the internal rhyme-words within every hemistich and dictating the properties which they should have (i.e. one morpho-phonological structure, one final consonant bearing one case-ending, -ɛu, etc.).

This is even more obvious in A.T.'s verses which exhibit Jina:s or 'alliteration' [see Chapter IV]. In those cases, the poet seems to have built his line around one or more phono-semantic 'cores' whose presence is determinant and of which the rhyme-word seems to have been the focus of his attention during the act of creation.

A.T.'s poetry provides us with an extremely large variety of verses exhibiting this feature, and it is hoped that the following examples would suffice to illustrate it:

Example One [Vol. II, p. 30, l. 47-48]:

1. wa ʔinni: la-ʔarju: ʔan tuqallida ji:dahu:
   qila:data masqu:li-d-duba:bi muhannadi: ,
2. munaddamatan bi-l-mawti yaħda: bi-ħalyiha:
   muqalliduha: fi-n-na:si du:na-l-muqalladi:
1. (I wish you adorn his neck with a necklace
   [from the] glittery-sided Indian sword,

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1. Here, only jiba:lun is different in its morpho-phonological structure, CiCa:Cun, while the three other nouns share the same one CuCu:Cun. However, they all have in common the syllabic structure cv-cvv-cvc.

2. [a necklace] strung from death whose bestower will enjoy its luxury amongst people, but not the one on whom it was bestowed.[1])

This example is the more interesting because the figure (built around the triliteral root q-l-d) occupies two consecutive lines strongly related to each other.

Example two [Vol. I, p. 345, l. 4]:

ʔin tabraħa: wa taba:ri:ħi: ɛala:kabidin
ma: tastaqirru fa-damɛi: ɣayru ba:riħiha:
(my tears will never recede if you depart
and [leave me with] my agonies [of love].)

Example three [Vol. I, p. 106, l. 39]:

ya: ɛaqba Ṭawqin ʔayyu ɛaqbi ɛaʃi:ratin
ʔantum, wa rubbata muɛqibin lam yuɛqibi:
(You are [certainly] the best off-spring [that may be related to] a tribe, you the sons of Ṭawq; yet how many a child-bearer [who appears as if] he never gave birth to any.)[2]

Example four [Vol. II, p. 102, l. 4]:

wa ḍaliltu ʔunʃiduhu: wa ʔanʃudu ʔahlahu:
wa-l-ħuznu xidni: na:ʃidan ʔaw munʃida:
(And I stood [there] reciting verses to the [abandoned encampment], searching for its

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1. i.e. you will enjoy people's gratitude for having rid them of that rebellious unbeliever.

2. Here, the poet is praising the descendants of his patron Ṭawq and his tribe. He is trying to say that there are many people who may have sons and descendants, yet they seem to have none so much those descendants are far from fame and success.

inhabitants while sadness was my [only] companion in searching and reciting.)

Example five [Vol. II, p. 72, l. 17]:

ʕada: qa:ṣidan li-l-ħamdi ħatta: ʔaṣa:bahu:
wa kam min muṣi:bin qaṣdahu: ʕayru qa:ṣidi:
(He [always] strove for praiseworthy [deeds]
until he succeeded, yet how many a successful
man who [succeeds] without striving for it.)

In each one of those examples, the rhyme-word seems to exert its influence on the rest of the verse. Not only does it impose itself at the end of the line (with its specific syllabic structure and stress), but it also 'controls' the poet's selection of his words in the middle of the verse; hence these alternations of morphological variants derived from the same root (e.g. ʕaqb / muʕqib / yuʕqib) which divide the line into small units so close to each other in their basic meaning that only subtle nuances help to save them from pure tautology. From then on, ambiguity prevails as an essential element of poetic expression, and the reader (or listener) must proceed with care to follow the meaning.

Here, one must recall the critics' theory on poetic composition[1] according to which the poet fixes in advance a list of possible rhyme-words which are most convenient for the metre that he selected, then he proceeds with his work, trying to make every line link up with the

1. See, for instance, Ibn Raʃi:q: op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 209-211.

rhyme-words available to him. Accordingly, he tends to make his verses in such a way that the beginning gives an inkling of the rhyme-word, and all the parts of the line lead to their ultimate end. It is in this connection that devices like taṣdi:r (lit. Fronting) [see Chapter IV, sect. 2, p.185-8], tamki:n and tawʃi:ħ were developed.[1] In this way, one may understand the role of those phono-semantic correspondences in achieving the junction required and reinforcing the formal organization of the poetic structure. This is true, for instance, of this line by A.T. [Vol. II, p. 266, l. 19]:

ma: fi-n-nuju:mi siwa: taɛillati ba:ṭilin
qadumat wa ʔussisa ʔifkuha: taʔsi:sa:
(Astrology is nothing but an antiquated pretext
for a deeply-rooted falsehood),

where the poet does not use taʔsi:sa: to reinforce the meaning of the verb ʔussisa (lit. to be established), as is normally the case with this type of construct; rather, he resorts to ʔussisa because he already had the rhyme-word taʔsi:sa: in mind; in a way, ʔussisa is just part of the rhyme-word of which it announces the arrival. The same may be said concerning the relationship between the verb taṣṭa:du (i.e. she hunts down) and the adjective ṣi:d (i.e. haughty) in the following line [Vol. I, p. 385, l. 4]:

waħʃiyyatun tarmi-l-qulu:ba ʔida-ɣtadat
wasna: fa-ma: taṣṭa:du ɣayra-ṣ-ṣi:di:

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1. See Quda:ma: op.cit., p. 96.

(Her wild beauty strikes the hearts when she adopts a gaze heavy with slumber; [with such a beauty] she [can] hunt down the haughtiest [of men].);

in this line, every word seems to prepare the way for the final rhyme-word, and the direction of meaning seems to be always leading to it.[1] By mobilizing his language on all its levels to serve for this purpose and not letting his sentences go freely, the poet avoids falling into dangerous acrobatics and, at the same time, reinforces the links between every verse and the rhyme-word assigned to it. It is here that the function of those phono-semantic cores mentioned earlier is best reflected, and J. Ben Cheikh sums it up very well:

> "Répartis tout le long du vers, ils captent le sens et le contrôlent. Car l'homophonie, plus elle s'affirme, plus elle est réductrice de l'espace où se meut un énoncé enserré en des limites étroites. Chaque noyau est une annonce et un rappel, le coup de gong qui retentit à intervalles réguliers. De l'un à l'autre, le vers ne peut plus avoir qu'une progression linéaire souverainement assurée par une rime omniprésente." 2

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1. For other interesting examples of the same features, see: Vol. I, p. 308, l. 41; p. 340, l. 2; p. 375, l. 22; Vol. II, p. 290, l. 12; etc.

2. J. Ben Cheikh: op.cit., p. 202.

CHAPTER VI

DEVIATION IN A.T.'S POETRY

After having dealt with parallelism in A.T.'s poetry and devoted the preceding three chapters to the study of different forms of 'schemes' or 'foregrounded repetitions of expression' which constitute a major characteristic of his style, we now turn to another feature in his language, namely to the study of 'tropes' which have been defined earlier [Chap. II - Conclusion] as 'foregrounded irregularities of content'. In fact, it has been pointed out that while parallelism, in A.T.'s poetry, is on the whole a feature of grammar and phonology, deviation, on the other hand, or the obtrusive linguistic irregularity, seems to be of primary artistic importance mainly when it occurs in the areas of deep structure and semantics. With regard to A.T., linguistic deviation has been essentially the foundation of his imagery and constituted the basis for his innovatory attempts in the domain of figurative language. To many of the Arab critics, those innovatory attempts have transformed his poetry into nothing but a variety of 'nonsense' and a set of 'absurdities' which are far from fulfilling the artistic effects which they were sought to achieve. Such considerations have been very much determined by the Arabs' traditional view of poetry, of its communicative quality and the intellectual relationship which it is supposed to establish

between the poet and his listener. In what follows, the attempt will be to reassess, on a linguistic basis, the various components of figurative language in A.T.'s poetry; a particular interest will be concentrated on 'metaphor' which occupies a central position in his style. Throughout, constant reference will be made to the views of the Arab critics in order to show their contribution to the study of this 'ever-inviting, ever-elusive'[1] aspect of language. But first, we shall briefly consider some features which have often occurred in A.T.'s poetry and which illustrate particular types of semantic 'oddity' in his language. The discussion of those features would help in laying the foundation of the inquiry into metaphor and similar devices which will follow.

I. Types of Semantic Oddity in A.T.'s Poetry

As an important means of communication, language is expected to ensure that some cognitive information is explicitly passed from one participant to another. For this reason, one cannot help being struck by the oddity of such expressions as 'what is the colour of Henri IVth's white horse?' or 'this amusing book is boring', in which the "normal information-bearing function of language seems to be disturbed or frustrated".[2] This is because the

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1. Borrowed from G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 148.

2. Ibid., p. 142.

first sentence is 'senseless' and conveys no information at all,[4] while the second one is 'absurd' and conveys 'paradoxical' or self-conflicting items of information.

To those types of semantic oddity, another one of exceptional importance must be added: it is the kind of absurdity, mentioned earlier [Chap. II, p.92-3] which results from making a 'mistake of selection', that is, from the association of structurally incompatible elements. To illustrate this particular feature, I shall restrict myself to simple relations of meaning between small groups of Arabic words:

1. ... fa-ɣtarif ɛilman[1] (lit. 'and scoop knowledge up'),
2. naṭaqat muqlatu-l-fata:[2] (i.e. the man's eye has spoken)
3. baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya:[3] (i.e. the whiteness of gifts).

To explain the 'oddity' which accompanies the first two sentences, it should be pointed out that each verb in Arabic, as in English, is restricted as to what kind of subject can precede, and what kind of complement can follow it. Accordingly, complexes of grammatical and semantic features are used to distinguish sub-classes of lexical categories and, thereby, prevent the syntagmatic co-occurrence of incompatible words in structure. Those features form the basis of the 'selectional rules' recently introduced by the transformational school of linguistics.

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1. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 12, l.8.
2. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 477, l.1.
3. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 205, l. 21.
4. This example is further discussed on p. 325 and p. 327.

Thus, the transitive verb -ɣtarif (i.e. scoop up) in S1, understood literally, only makes sense if followed by a concrete object, a condition which is not fulfilled by the abstract noun ɛilman (i.e. knowledge). Similarly, naṭaqat (i.e. she has spoken) in S2 requires a human subject, which the noun muqlatu (i.e. the eye) is not. The third example shows a variation on the same theme: it is the noun ɛaṭa:ya: (i.e. gifts, particularly money) which is syntagmatically incompatible with the colour baya:ḍ (i.e. whiteness). By violating the selection restrictions of the language, those sentences have resulted in semantic oddity and literal senselessness. However, such a type of deviation is common and even expected in poetry; in fact, it is at the root of much figurative language. Imaginatively, for instance, it may be possible to interpret the word baya:ḍ (whiteness) in such a way that the expression baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya: is made valid. This is equally applicable to the first two sentences: their apparent 'absurdity' may be rendered meaningful depending on the leap which the reader's imagination is prepared to take in order to apply a certain significance to it.

At this stage, one might ask whether there are any grounds for separating the type of semantic oddity due to the violation of selectional rules from that which is found in such paradoxical statements as 'this amusing book is boring', mentioned earlier. This is justified by the fact that, after all, the latter statement is also based on the selection of an expression at variance with

its context. However, this is not exactly the case; for while the clash between 'amusing' and 'boring' is irreconcilable, the two adjectives being directly contrary to each other, there is no such clash of meaning between 'whiteness' and 'gifts' in 'baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya:', or between 'speaking' and 'eye' in 'naṭaqat muqlatu-l-fata:'.

In this connection, it is interesting to introduce G.N. Leech's distinction between what he calls 'logical' and 'factual' absurdity. According to him, there are "two kinds of absurdity: one contradicting something we know about meaning, the other contradicting our general factual knowledge of the universe".[1] Thus, 'a female father' is rejected as linguistically or logically absurd because of what "we know about the meaning of 'father' in relation to other, connected words, like 'son', 'parent', 'male', and 'mother'".[2] 'David Copperfield's mother never met his father', on the other hand, is rejected as being sheer nonsense on the basis of our factual biological knowledge rather than for linguistic reasons.[3] This distinction shows the importance of the interpretation element in the acceptance or rejection of a particular utterance. Indeed, as G.N. Leech rightly asserts, "it is not the expression, but rather an interpretation of the expression, that is dismissed as absurd

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 135.
2. Ibid., p. 135; the example mentioned here is Leech's.
3. This example, amongst others, is also mentioned by G.N. Leech: Ibid., p. 135.

or vacuous".[1] Thus, confronted with a question like 'what is the colour of Henri IVth's white horse ?' we work according to the hypothesis that people do not normally ask about something which they already know, and therefore, dismiss it as being idiotic or absurd. The same remarks apply to the paradoxical statement 'this amusing book is boring', which strikes us mainly because it disrupts the normal process of communication to which we are used. However, "human nature abhors a vacuum of sense",[2] and, according to this principle, one tends to look for a less obvious interpretation which would compensate for the superficial oddity of the utterance. Thus, it is possible for instance to make up a non-paradoxical reading for 'this amusing book is boring' by imagining quotation marks enclosing the word 'amusing', which is then taken ironically to mean 'this-supposedly-"amusing" book', or 'what you, he or they call "amusing" book is boring'. Similarly, the apparent absurdity of A.T.'s <u>naṭaqat muqlatu-l-fata:</u> (i.e. the man's eye has spoken), quoted earlier, will disappear if one rules out the literal interpretation of <u>naṭaqat</u> (i.e. it - the eye - spoke) to search for a figurative one. In this way, one is led to notice the connection between a 'crying eye' and 'speech' which both serve to 'express' someone's state of mind.

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1. Ibid., p. 135.

2. Ibid., p. 135.

The selection between different linguistically possible interpretations of a particular instance of semantic oddity depends very much on the factors of situation and the linguistic context in which it occurs. Thus, when A.T. says [Vol. I, p. 205, l. 21]:

> wa ʔaḥsanu min nawrin tufattiḥuhu-ṣ-ṣaba:
> baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya: fi: sawa:di-l-maṭa:libi:
> (The indulging gifts [which fulfil] the tormenting needs [of someone] are more beautiful than [the sight of] blossoms opened by the East-wind),[1]

the semantic 'absurdity' of baya:ḍ (i.e. whiteness) and sawa:d (i.e. blackness) in this particular context immediately rules out the literal interpretation of the two terms, and causes the reader to look for a figurative one. In fact this process takes place almost unconsciously, although there is nothing in the definition of, for instance, ɛaṭa:ya: (i.e. gifts) and baya:ḍ (i.e. whiteness) which excludes their co-occurrence in the context, nor is there anything factual which makes it impossible for 'gifts' to be 'white'. However, the parallel which A.T. has sought to establish in this verse between baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya: and sawa:du-l-maṭa:lib makes a literal interpretation

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1. Literally, baya:ḍu-l-ɛaṭa:ya: would be rendered as 'white gifts'; whiteness (or the radiance of the face) here stands as a symbol for the happiness to which the needy is brought once he is supported; sawa:du-l-maṭa:lib, on the other hand, would be rendered as 'black needs', because need brings 'darkness' and 'gloom' on the face of the needy.

of baya:d unlikely, especially because sawa:d (lit. blackness), in this particular context, cannot be taken literally ('black needs' being linguistically absurd). On the other hand, for sentences which would normally be considered senseless or absurd, it is possible to devise a situation in which they would become acceptable and even significant. This is the case, for instance, with the question 'what is the white colour of Henri IVth's white horse ?', if taken in a situation where someone, a father or a teacher, is trying to test the sharpness and alertness of a child.

The importance of context and situation in the interpretation of linguistic oddity in A.T.'s verse will be further examined in connection with his use of metaphor and figurative language in general. In what follows of this section, we shall deal with some examples from A.T.'s poetry which are peculiar for some semantic oddity that comes to disturb the normal 'information-bearing' function we expect from language. Cases which display the poet's violation of selectional rules will be considered later on, when we come to assess his use of figurative language.

1. Semantic redundancy in A.T.'s verse

Semantic redundancy is a feature that may be frequently encountered in A.T.'s compositions, although in normal everyday speech it would be censured, simply because it goes against the often expressed principle that language must be economic for efficient communication. This is well illustrated by the following lines introducing

one of his panegyrics [Vol. II, p. 262-263, l. 1 and 4]:

1. 2a-qaʃi:ba rabɛihimu: 2ara:ka dari:sa:
   wa qira: ḍuyu:fika lawɛatan wa raṡi:sa:
4. ... wa 2ara: rubu:ɛaka mu:ħiʃa:tin baɛdama:
   qad kunta ma2lu:fa-l-maħalli 2ani:sa:

1. (The [usually] luxuriant quarters have become bare and are dealing out grief and languor to their visitors;
4. I see that they have become forlorn after they used to be friendly and familiar);[1]

at the end of line 1, rasi:sa: (i.e. languor), close in its meaning to lawɛatan (i.e. grief, sorrow), comes to fill in the 'gap' remaining at the rhyming position, while in line 4, 2ani:sa: (i.e. friendly, used to the presence of people) follows ma2lu:fa-l-maħalli (i.e. familiar, frequently attended by people). In circumstances of functional communication, this type of semantic redundancy, known in rhetoric as pleonasm, is regarded as a fault of style, but poets have been allowed to use it sparingly as a form of licence which can be of great help in the padding out of their verse. Thus, as shown in the two lines above, one finds A.T. often resorting to such means as the conjunction of quasi-synonyms in order to complete a line of verse; this is particularly pronounced in the following line [Vol. II, p. 265, l. 14]:

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1. The translation of the lines here is slightly different from the original, where the poet is addressing the desolate quarters directly.

qad bu:rikat tilka-l-buṭu:nu wa quddisat
tilka-ḍ-ḍuhu:ru bi-qurbihi: taqdi:sa:

(may those valleys be blessed and those hills venerated for his presence [i.e. the patron's presence]),

where bu:rikat and quddisat (i.e. may they be blessed and venerated), buṭu:n and ḍuhu:r (i.e. valleys and hills) are respectively quasi-synonym terms in the context of Arabic panegyrics, regardless of the literal meaning that each one of them may have. In this connection, it must be recalled that parallelism of synonymy, which has been discussed previously in relation to A.T.'s poetry [Chap. III, sect. 3], is also a form of 'pleonasm' that may be highly functional in his work.[1]

In some cases, A.T.'s attempt to complete a line of verse has led him to resort to a form of 'pleonasm' that has been considered culpable by his critics; this is well-illustrated by the following verse [Vol. I, p. 312, l. 4]:

ka-ḍ-ḍabyati-l-ʔadma:ʔi ṣa:fat fa-rtaɛat
ẓahara-l-ɛara:ri-l-ɣadda wa-l-jaṯja:ṯa:

(... [of ladies] like fine white gazelles, in the summer, grazing the sweet-smelling branches of luxuriant ɛara:r and jaṯja:ṯ);[2]

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1. For other interesting examples see A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, p. 247, l. 16,; p. 250, l. 25-26; p. 265, l. 15; p. 363, l. 15; etc.

2. On the meaning of ɛara:r and jaṯja:ṯ, see Chap. II, p. 71, f.n. 1.

commenting on this line, al-ɛaskari:[1] notes the poet's use of ɛara:r and jatja:t, two plants with a sweet-smelling fragrance, and points out the semantic redundancy which it includes in that the word jatja:t merely repeats the aspect of meaning (namely, the sweet-smelling flavour) contained in ɛara:r; had there been another purpose behind the use of jatja:t apart from the necessity of rhyme, the poet, according to him, would have used a different word, one for the branches of a high tree for instance, which would have been more appropriate and poetically effective in that the gazelles, in the latter case, would have to stretch their necks high up, thus showing one more aspect of their beauty.

Semantic redundancy in A.T.'s poetry may also occur in the form of 'tautological' statements which are apparently vacuous and reveal no information at all. This is the case in the following line [Vol. II, p. 427, l. 14]:

ka?anna-l-ɛahda ɛan ɛufrin ladayna:
wa ?in ka:na-t-tala:qi: ɛan tala:qi:
(whenever we meet, it is as though we have been apart for a long time, even if the meeting [immediately follows] the other),

and in this one [Vol. IV, p. 51, l. 1]:

da?bu ɛayni-l-buka:?u wa-l-ħuznu da:bi:
fa-truki:ni: , wuqi:ti ma: bi: , li-ma: bi:

1. al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 450.

(I shall persist on my cries and persevere
in my sorrow, so leave me alone to what is in
me, may you be preserved from what is in me),

and in this one [Vol. I, p. 154, l. 28]:

wa ma: ḍi:qu ʔaqṭa:ri-l-bila:di ʔaḍa:fani:
ʔilayka wa la:kin madhabi: fi:ka madhabi:

(It is not the lack of space in the world which
brought me to [your abode], but my belief in
you is my belief).

Redundancy in the first example is less obvious than in the following two. In fact, it is not a real tautology but something close to it: the second half, wa ʔin ka:na-t-tala:qi: ɛan tala:qi: simply repeats the meaning inherent in the first one and presents it in a different way. On the other hand, the repetition of the word tala:qi: with only one preposition ɛan (in the context, after) separating the two is quite effective in reinforcing the poet's idea and 'enacting' the short lapse of time between one meeting and the other.

Semantic vacuity in the second example is present in the repetition of the expression ma:bi: (lit. what is in me): as shown in the translation, it apparently reveals no information worth having. However, by this very vacuity of sense, the poet succeeds in summing up all that one needs to know about his state of mind, his sadness and the unfortunate fate which he is facing.

The cryptic expression madhabi: fi:ka madhabi: (i.e. my belief in you is my belief), in the third example,

recalls the popular use of tautology in the remark 'I know what I know'[1] which implies that the speaker means to keep his knowledge secret. But A.T. in this example does not have any secret to hide; his intention is rather to express his full belief in the patron's generosity and noble manners and make everyone know his good nature. Vacuity of sense here is not needless, it rather helps to make the meaning more forceful. Those examples show particularly that the apparent lack of cognitive meaning in poetic expression does not necessarily go with a lack of significance; in fact, the vacuity of tautology can serve efficiently to convey information about the poet's feelings and thoughts.

2. Semantic 'absurdity' in A.T.'s poetry

Now, we turn to some cases of 'absurdity' which entail irreconcilable elements of meaning or reference. An interesting example of such a feature is present in A.T.'s description of fire in the conquered city of Ammorium [Vol. I, pp. 53-54, l. 26-29]:

1. ɣa:darta fi:ha: bahi:ma-l-layli wa-hwa ḍuẖan yaʃulluhu wasṭaha: ṣubẖun mina-l-lahabi: ,
2. ẖatta: kaʔanna jala:bi:ba-d-duja: raɣibat ɛan lawniha: wa kaʔanna-ʃ-ʃamsa lam taɣibi: ;
3. ḍawʔun mina-n-na:ri wa-d̲-d̲alma:ʔu ɛa:kifatun, wa d̲ulmatun min duxa:nin fi: ḍuẖan ʃaẖibi: ;

1. The example is mentioned by G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 138.

4. fa-ʃ-ʃamsu ṭa:liɛatun min da: wa qad ʔafalat ,
wa-ʃ-ʃamsu wa:jibatun min da: wa lam tajibi:

1. (You left behind there the pitchblack night [as it were] noonday, driven forth in the midst of her by a dawn of flame,
2. So that it was as though the robes of darkness foresook their [habitual] hue, or as though the sun had never set;
3. A radiance of fire whilst the shadows brooded, and an obscurity of smoke amidst a pallid noon;
4. The sun rising from that [conflagration] after it had set, and the sun sinking from that [smoke] when it had not sunk).[1]

From the first line, one is faced with a set of apparently irreconcilable elements: 'a pitchblack night' looking as though it were 'noonday', a 'radiant light' in the middle of 'brooding' dark 'shadows', the sun 'rising' and 'sinking' at the same time, all are elements the association of which comes contrary to our general factual knowledge of the universe. However, the poet succeeds very well in exploiting our ability to go simultaneously through completely opposite objects of experience (love and hatred, pleasure mingled with pain, etc.), and the poetic situation which he is describing makes those pairs of incompatibles acceptable to us, readers, some in their literal physical meaning (e.g. daw?un mina-n-na:ri with dulmatun min duxa:nin, i.e. 'a radiance of fire' with 'an obscurity of smoke'), and others in a figurative sense (e.g. a 'pitch-

1. The translation is by A.J. Arberry: op.cit., pp. 54-55.

black night ... driven forth by a dawn of flame'; the image of the sun in line 4). Contrary to our first expectation, in fact, those opposite elements of reference turn out to be perfectly compatible. This case of apparent absurdity is understood as a 'mixture' of light and darkness, of radiance and shadows, as a mysterious merging of contrary effects which A.T. was so often capable of creating.

Semantic absurdity in A.T.'s poetry manifests itself also in the sometimes incredible or marvellous events and worlds projected by his creative imagination. This aspect of absurdity and illogicality is indeed related to the communicative quality of poetry in general and to the validity of the poet's pronouncements; in other words, to whether poetry is truthful or simply a lie. Thus, A.T.'s poetry abounds for instance in 'hyperbole' and exaggerations which are often incredible because at variance with known facts. When he says about the caliph leading his army to victory [Vol. I, p. 59, l. 40]:

> law lam yaqud jaħfalan yawma-l-waγa: la-γada:
> min nafsihi waħdaha: fi: jaħfalin lajibi:
>
> (Had he not led a massive troop on the day of battle, he would have been accompanied by a clamorous troop consisting of himself, alone),[1]

we are aware that this is an overstatement which is not just incredible in the given situation but in any situation,

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1. The translation is by A.J. Arberry: Ibid., p. 56.

because outside the bounds of possibility. Yet, we accept it and judge that A.T. means to say no more than 'the caliph is awesome'. Similarly, when he describes the patron's generosity and rigour in those unmeasured terms [Vol. I, pp. 283-284, l. 8-9]:

1. yami:nu muħammadin baħrun xiḍammun
   ṭamu:ħu-l-mawji majnu:nu-l-ɛuba:bi: ,
2. tafi:ḍu sama:ħatan wa-l-muznu mukdin ,
   wa taqṭaɛu wa-l-ħusa:mu-l-ɛaḍbu na:bi:
1. (Muhammad's right hand is a vast ocean [with] towering waves and mad floods,
2. It flows with magnanimity while the rain cloud is waterless, and cuts while the sharp sword is blunt),

the patron addressed would have been under no necessity to find out whether the remark that he is a 'vast ocean' with 'towering waves' and 'mad floods' was true or not, as its content is too fantastic to be believed. In other words, he is aware of the true state of affairs and conscious of the real proportions of his generosity and rigour.

'Hyperbole', or the figure of overstatement (ɣuluww, ʔiɣra:q, ʔifra:ṭ), is an instance of tropes that has frequently occurred in A.T.'s poetry. Although it is a stock device of C.A. poetry, some Arab scholars consider him to be responsible for setting the example to other poets who, like him, used it often with no moderation.[1] In this connection, it is important to note that

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1. See Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. II, p. 63.

Arabic poetic theory has generally known two opposite attitudes towards the validity of poetic discourse: one in defence of poetic sincerity and truthfulness, the other advocating the poet's freedom from objective truth or even the necessity to use the poetic lie in order to achieve poetic quality. However, it is rare to find the critics giving theoretical opinions about this question, apart from quoting statements in support of one or even both points of view, and stating sometimes their own preference for one or the other, as is the case with al-ɛaskari: who says:

> "Most of the poetic compositions are based on lie and on the absurdity of impossible attributes, qualities that go beyond the normal and deceiving words, slander of unblemished reputations, false testimonies, calumnious discourse. It is especially so for the pre-Islamic poetry, which is most powerful and excellent, but nobody expects from it anything but a beautiful wording and an excellent poetic concept ... A philosopher was once told: 'so-and-so lies in his poem'. To which he answered: 'One expects from a poet a beautiful discourse; truthfulness is expected from prophets.'" 1

Al-ɛaskari's statement shows clearly that the question for him is mainly a matter of aesthetic and even rhetorical evaluation of the poet and his work; hence his acceptance of the poetic lie and his belief that the poet should be excused from explicit sincerity as long as poetic quality is achieved. Al-Jurja:ni: in turn presents his arguments in defence of truthfulness; he writes:

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1. al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-Ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 146, translated by V. Cantarino: op.cit., pp. 35-36.

> "leaving aside exaggeration and hyperbole and adhering to objectivity and authenticity and relying on reason acting in accordance with sound logic is more desirable and preferable since, in such a way, the fruit of poetry is sweeter, its influence more durable, its benefits more obvious, and its results more numerous." 1

Having exposed his argument for poetic truthfulness in which only pragmatic elements are underlined, he turns to the poetic lie about which he says:

> "the poet relies on achieving greater range and imaginative creativity and claims that that is reality which is basically approximation and imitation ... Here the poet can find a way to be original or add to the old to display his inventiveness of new forces ..."[2]

Although al-Jurja:ni: does not declare himself exclusively in favour of either view, he seems more inclined, from the arguments which he uses, to admit the supremacy of the poetic lie mainly because of the restrictions which a strict conformity to reality would impose on the poetic expression.[3]

Whatever the traditional attitude towards this question may be, it is now admitted that the poet is free to change reality and transform it at will, to see it in a different subjective way, independent and perhaps even contrary to the truthful sincerity of objectivity. Unlike the historian, who is expected to present us with bald

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1. al-Jurja:ni: (ɛabdu-l-Qa:hir): "ʔasra:ru-l-Bala:ɣah", Vol. II, pp. 133-134, translated by V. Cantarino: op.cit., p. 37.

2. Ibid., p. 134, translated by V. Cantarino: p. 38.

3. For more details on the matter see al-Jurja:ni: Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 132-135; Quda:ma Ibn Jaɛfar: "Naqdu-ʃ-ʃiɛr", pp. 6, 26, 28; Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. II, pp. 61-65; Vol. I, pp. 22, 25; V. Cantarino: op.cit., pp. 27-40, reviews the question in relation to the spiritual and intellectual growth of Islam.

factual statements about reality, the poet is entitled to merely present us with an illusion of real events, using devices that help us to reach a deeper and more profound kind of truth. He is even allowed to invent a whole world of fiction and freely manipulate people and events in it. We must therefore keep separate in our minds, as Leech asserts,

> "the division between fact and fiction on the one hand, and on the other, the distinction between truth and falsehood as it applies, for example, to newspaper reports or judicial evidence. Still further, we must bear in mind that if we say hyperbole distorts the truth, we mean it belies the state of affairs we actually understand to exist either in the real world, or in the imaginary, fictional world created by the poet." 1

So, for instance, when A.T. says boastfully, in answer to his mother who wished to see him back [Vol. IV, p. 557, l. 18-19]:

1. wa law baṣurat bihi la-ra?at jari:ḍan bi-ma:?i-d-dahri ẖilyatuhu-ʃ-ʃuẖu:bu: ,
2. ka-naṣli-s-sayfi ɛurriya min kisa:hu: wa fallat min maḍa:ribihi-l-xuṭu:bu:

1. (Had she been able to see him, she [i.e. the poet's mother] would have found a man weary and emaciated by the severe blows of fate,
2. Like the blade of a sword drawn out of its sheath, with whose blows vicissitudes were subdued),

we judge these statements to be hyperbolic by reference to

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 166.

the dramatic situation in which the poet utters them, namely at the beginning of his career when, still a young man, he used to serve as a water-carrier in the teaching circles of the great mosque, in the Egyptian capital of the time, Fusṭa:ṭ. In other words, we recognize them as being 'in excess of the situation', whether that situation is factual or fictional. However, this rhetorical 'misrepresentation' of reality serves to emphasize the poet's claim and makes it more powerful and convincing. This result is of course achieved by our ability to 'translate' the utterance and not accept it at its face value, thus rejecting the obvious literal explanation as 'incredible' or 'unacceptable' in the situation, in order to arrive at a more acceptable underlying interpretation.

Another aspect of hyperbole is that it is a conscious overstatement which foregrounds the theme by paradigmatic choices that would normally seem excessive in the context. This is in fact applicable to the previous examples of this feature as well as to the following verse said in praise of the patron [Vol. I, p. 227, l. 24]:

> fa-nawwala ħatta: lam yajid man yuni:luhu ,
> wa ħa:raba ħatta: lam yajid man yuħa:ribuh
> ([So many] were granted [his bounty] that he found no more [needy] to give to, and he subdued [so many of his war enemies] that no one was left to vie with him),

or in this one, where he is describing his sadness to be

separated from his beloved [Vol. III, p. 310, l. 8]:

> ʔafnaytu min baʿdihi fayḍa-d-dumu:ʿi kama:
> ʔafnaytu fi: hajrihi ṣabri: wa sulwa:ni:
> (Flowing tears have been exhausted since [she left], and exhausted as well are my solace and forebearance).

In both examples, the poet's statements appear to be exaggerated, mainly because the paradigmatic choices which have been made at different stages of the utterance have resulted, in each case, into an extravagant claim which, however, could not be verified or even refuted. Moreover, the poet might even assert that this is no exaggeration at all, that his esteem for his patron's moral qualities is so high, and his longing for his love so strong that they can by no means be expressed in a more measured way than this. This is to show that hyperbole is very closely concerned with personal values and sentiments, that it is quite adequate for making subjective claims which "may seem like exaggerations from the point of view of an onlooker, but from the speaker's viewpoint may be utterly serious".[1] It is no coincidence therefore to find this feature quite profuse in A.T.'s panegyrics, elegies and love poems, where it serves as an effective means for celebrating such human ideals as those of love, religion, generosity, courage and the like.

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 168.

II. Figurative Language in A.T.'s Poetry

Having dealt in some detail with two types of linguistic oddity in A.T.'s poetry, the third type mentioned, namely violation of selection restrictions, will be now more fully illustrated. As noted earlier, this feature is at the root of much figurative language. On many occasions, indeed, semantic rules appear to be violated by the poet, and yet the piece of language in question is not dismissed as a piece of nonsense. On the contrary, such a violation is viewed as an extremely powerful creative factor. Thus, when A.T. says to the patron, consoling him in his sickness [Vol. III, p. 53, l. 1 - 2nd half]:

... wa la: yakun li-l-ɛula: fi: faqdika-t-tukulu

(may noble deeds be not bereaved of you),

this statement is on the face of it absurd because it violates the selectional rules which demand human or animal nouns, not nouns of abstract entities, as subjects of 'bereavement'. For this reason, the regular, literal interpretation of A.T.'s assertion is 'blocked', and a special interpretation is assigned to it by the invocation of an 'unorthodox' rule of expression making it possible for this statement to be understood as implying that (to noble deeds, the effect of your loss is 'like' a mother's bereavement of her son). Similarly, when A.T. describes the country of Adhrabijan after it was freed by the victorious caliph [Vol. III, p. 132, l.4 - 1st half]:

fa-la-ʔadrabi:ja:nu-xtiya:lun ...

([Now at last], Adhrabijan [may] enjoy pride [and delight] ...),

the literal acceptance of this statement is equally blocked because it violates the selection restrictions which require a personal noun, not a name of a place, in this context as subject of 'pride'; Adhrabijan in this way is construed as 'the inhabitants of Adhrabijan'.

As can be easily noticed, the figurative interpretation of the above examples is not completely random, and the blocked literal senses seem to be related to the 'irregular', transferred senses in a systematic way. This is because language in general contains rules of 'transference of meaning' which consist of particular mechanisms for deriving one meaning of a word from another on the ground of a certain relationship between the two. A general formula which fits all rules of transference is suggested by G.N. Leech:

> "the figurative sense F may replace the literal sense L if F is related to L in such-and-such a way." 1

A.T.'s use of Adhrabijan in the sense of the 'inhabitants of Adhrabijan' is a simple example of this rule; this is also the case with the metaphor contained in the 'bereaved noble deeds'. In fact, the two cases may be considered as standard examples of meaning transference which occur automatically in our daily speech and of which we are

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 148.

scarcely aware.[1] However, in literature in general, and in A.T.'s poetry in particular, those mechanisms of language are used more daringly and are often applied beyond the usual restrictions. They constitute the basis of some of the most established tropes in C.A. poetry.

Simile (taʃbi:h) is the root-notion of these tropes: it is the comparison derived from likeness perceived between two referents. This is the case for instance in the following two lines where A.T. is describing a flower [Vol. II, p. 195, l. 15-16]:

1. min kulli za:hiratin taraqraqu bi-n-nada:
   fa-ka?annaha: ɛaynun ɛalayhi taɲaddaru ;
2. tabdu: wa yaɲjubuha-l-jami:mu ka?annaha:
   ɛadra:?u tabdu: ta:ratan wa taxaffaru .

1. (... With every flower glittering in dew like an eye bathed with tears;
2. It appears [for a while] then hides behind the thickets like a virgin who shows herself for a moment then bashfully disappears);

in this example, each line contains a simile which points out a likeness between two different objects of reference: in line 1, the comparison is between a quality shared by two items (the flower covered with dew like an eye bathed with tears); while in line 2, it is between two complex

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1. For a technical account on 'rules of transference' in language, see U. Weinreich: "Explorations in Semantic Theory", in "Current Trends in Linguistics", Vol. III, pp. 455-471; see also G. Stern: "Meaning and Change of Meaning", particularly pp. 340-350.

actions (the flower appearing and hiding behind the thickets like a virgin showing herself then bashfully disappearing). In both cases, the ground of the comparison is explicitly stated. By combining two elements - a "tenor" and a "vehicle"[1] - and specifying the hidden analogy between them, both images produce a kind of double vision in which the two terms illuminate each other, thus making the comparison convincing and communicative. This is however not the case in the following verse describing the effect of wine on people [Vol. I, p. 29, l. 13]:

> xarqa:ʔu yalɛabu bi-l-ɛuqu:li ħaba:buha:
> ka talaɛɛubi-l-ʔafɛa:li bi-l-ʔasma:ʔi
> ([like] a clumsy handmaiden, wine bubbles play with people's minds just as verbs play with nouns);[2]

in this example, the comparison between two phenomena as different from each other as the effect of wine on people and that of verbs on nouns is quite unusual. In addition, the formal structure of the simile is equally unusual: rather than comparing an abstract tenor to a concrete vehicle ("verbs play with nouns as wine does with people's minds"), which is the normal procedure, A.T. inverts the two terms and assimilates a physical experience to an

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1. The terms 'tenor' and 'vehicle' are borrowed from I.A. Richards: "Philosophy of Rhetoric", p. 36.

2. The poet here is thinking of verbs and their grammatical effect on the nouns with which they are used, changing them from the nominative to the accusative and vice versa, according to the context.

abstract linguistic process. This has the effect of making the simile purely subjective and therefore hardly communicative, a feature which has been often criticized by Arab rhetoricians and literary scholars in A.T.'s imagery. The same remarks apply to the following example [Vol. IV, p. 417-418, l. 20-21]:

1. wa kuntu ʔaɛazza ɛizzan min qanu:ɛin
   taɛawwaḍahu ṣafu:ħun ɛan jahu:li ;
2. fa-ṣirtu ʔaḍalla min maɛnan daqi:qin
   bihi faqrun ʔila: ḍihnin jali:li .

1. (I had more honour than a bounty-seeker turning to a merciful benefactor for protection against the mischief of the wicked;[1]
2. Then I became [even] more frustrated than a subtle concept in need of a sharp understanding);

here, the poet is describing his frustration, an abstract mental process; but instead of comparing it to something perceptible by the senses which, by its actuality, would make it more directly accessible, he compares it to something equally abstract: 'a subtle concept in need of a sharp understanding'.[2] The simile produced is far-reached,

1. This line is another instance of A.T.'s intricate conceits. The few comments which follow it in the IVth volume of his work (p. 417) are of little help in understanding exactly what he meant to say. I had therefore to rely widely on my own interpretation of some of its words in order to translate it in the most adequate way possible.

2. Al-ɛaskari: "aṣ-Ṣina:ɛatayn", p. 242, noticed this fact about those two lines, and added that this way of using simile and other figurative devices is characteristic of A.T. and the followers of his trend amongst the new generation of Arab poets.

and the remoteness between its two terms is such that it requires some intellectual elaboration on the part of the reader in order to be understood. It is not sure that he would succeed in this task, but it is certain however that through his success or failure, he would be able either to comprehend or experience himself the poet's frustration. Used in this way, simile is no longer the figurative device to which we are so familiar in normal speech and which is repeated until worn into clichés. On the contrary, it becomes a unique manner of expressing ideas more vividly and forcefully, by means of a striking juxtaposition of usually incompatible objects of reference.

With simile, metaphor is the figurative device which is most prominent in A.T.'s poetry. It is based on analogy perceived between two objects of experience, and is usually conveyed by compression of the simile so that the object compared and the overt ground of likeness are not verbalized. This implicitness of metaphor is in fact the essence of figurative language and it will be more closely examined later. For the moment, a few examples from A.T.'s poetry will establish the relationship of literary metaphor to common usage.

Example One [Vol. I, p. 408, l.8]:

> ra:ħat ɣawa:ni-l-ħayyi ɛanka ɣawa:niya:
> yalbasna na?yan ta:ratan wa ṣudu:da:
> (The beautiful maidens of the tribe have renounced you [and] are wearing reserve and aversion [with you][1]).

1. i.e. (.. and are treating you with reserve and aversion).

Here, the metaphor contained in the second half (i.e. maidens wearing reserve and aversion) attributes concreteness or physical existence to abstract elements of experience (i.e. na?yan wa ṣudu:da:, reserve and aversion). This is achieved through an unusual clustering of structurally incompatible items of language. More explicitly, the verb 'to wear' (yalbasna) is one which requires a concrete 'wearable' object, not an abstract one. However, A.T. breaks this rule and uses it with two abstract objects, thus making absurd a literal understanding of yalbasna, and calling for a figurative interpretation to replace it. A possible way of interpreting this metaphor may be stated as follows: the maidens' attitude towards the poet is now one of constant reserve and aversion; they are holding to it just as one holds to the clothes which one is wearing.

Example Two [Vol. I, p. 79, l. 9]:

> mutadaffiqan ṣaqalu: bihi ?aħsa:bahum,
> ?inna-s-sama:ħata ṣayqalu-l-?aħsa:bi .
> (with their flowing generosity, they polished
> their noble origins, generosity is verily
> the polisher of noble origins).

At face value, the second half of this line purports to be a definition of 'generosity'; but it is plainly not the definition for this term which one would expect to find in a dictionary. Literally, one is well aware that 'generosity' is not a 'polisher' for 'noble origins', and that one of those terms is to be taken in a figurative sense.

In other words, one realizes that some transference of meaning (which may be called "metaphoric transference"[1]) has taken place in this example, and that a certain likeness is being perceived between the different terms of the metaphor and other elements of experience. Grammatically, the word ṣayqal (i.e. polisher) is incompatible with ʔaħsa:b (i.e. noble origins), which is abstract and would normally be replaced by a concrete object of some sort. This metaphor may be interpreted as follows: to noble origins, the effect of generosity is like the effect of a polisher which adds beauty and shine to a valuable piece of jewelry.

Example Three [Vol. I, p. 294, l. 13]:

kulla yawmin lahu wa kulla ʔawa:nin
xuluqun ḍa:ħikun wa ma:lun kaʔi:bu
(During all of his days and all the time,
his virtue is laughing, while his wealth
is in sorrow[2]).

In this example, we have an instance of the familiar poetic device of 'personification' (also known as the 'humanizing' or 'anthropomorphic' metaphor) which attributes characteristics of humanity to what is not human. Here, an abstraction (xuluq, i.e. virtue) and an inanimate object (ma:lun, i.e. wealth) are figuratively represented as

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1. Term proposed by G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 151.

2. The poet is here referring to the extreme generosity of the patron whose openhandedness leads to the destruction of his wealth, thus to its sorrow, while it satisfies his conscience.

humans: xuluqun ḍa:ħikun wa ma:lun ka2i:bu (i.e. his virtue is laughing while his wealth is in sorrow). The same may be said concerning the following metaphor by which the poet refers to the patron's strong hold over the problems which beset him in his life [Vol. I, p. 99, l. 19, 1st hemistich]:

> waṭi2a-l-xuṭu:ba wa kaffa min γulawa:2iha: ...
> ([He] trampled vicissitudes down and suppressed their pride ...).

The following two lines equally contain a series of humanizing metaphors [Vol. I, p. 171, l. 47-48]:

1. fa-2ida: ma-l-2ayya:mu 2asbaħna xursan kuddaman fi-l-faxa:ri, qa:ma xaṭi:ba: ;
2. ka:na da:2a-l-2iʃra:ki sayfuka wa-ʃ--taddat ʃaka:tu-l-huda: fa-kunta ṭabi:ba: .

1. (And when the days are struck dumb and have nothing to say [in proof of their] glorious deeds, he stands up and speaks fluently [about his];
2. Your sword has [always] been a malady for idolatry, and you the doctor for right guidance [whenever] its suffering is aggravated);

here again, non-human abstract referents are given human attributes and every one of the humanizing metaphors succeeds in combining three types of semantic connection between literal and figurative senses. In the personification of 2iʃra:k (i.e. idolatry) in line 2 for instance, there is an overlap between three categories of metaphors:

the humanizing, the animistic and the concretive. The same applies to the others.

Those examples from A.T.'s poetry show the tendency of metaphor to make a bridge between levels of experience which are not normally considered to be expressible in the same terms. In fact, this expressive power of metaphor manifests itself also in everyday language where, according to G.N. Leech, it serves

> "to explain the more undifferentiated areas of human experience in terms of the more immediate. We make abstractions tangible by perceiving them in terms of the concrete, physical world; we grasp the nature of inanimate things more vividly by breathing life into them; the world of nature becomes more real to us when we project into it the qualities we recognize in ourselves."[1]

In addition to simile and metaphor, symbolism (tamti:l, ramz) is an important figurative device in A.T.'s poetry. In fact, it constitutes the foundation of his best axiomatic verses. However, poetic symbols are different from similes and metaphors in that they are ambiguous, i.e. they may be understood literally as well as figuratively. This difference is very well illustrated in the following two lines [Vol. I, pp. 104-105, l. 36-37]:

1. baħrun yaṭimmu ɛala-l-ɛufa:ti wa ʔin tahij
   ri:ħu-s-suʔa:li bi-mawjihi yaɣlawlibi ;
2. wa-ʃ-ʃawlu ma: ħulibat tadaffaqa risluha: ,
   wa tajiffu dirratuha: ʔiḍa: lam tuħlabi .

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 158.

1. ([He is] an ocean which flows over those who seek for his bounty, and abounds in plenty whenever the wind of begging is astir;
2. [Likewise], the milkless camels pour forth with abundant milk once they are milked, but their teats will dry up when they are not);

in this example, the poet is describing the generosity of his patron; this is suggested by the outworn metaphor of the 'ocean' which introduces the first line, in addition to the key-word ɛufa:t (i.e. bounty-seekers) and the other more striking metaphor of ri:ħu-s-su?a:l (i.e. the wind of begging). By treating "ocean" and "wind of begging" as metaphors, one is led to answer the enigma posed by the apparent literal 'nonsense' present in this line. In other words, figurative interpretation comes here to make up for the literal absurdity of 'ocean' and 'wind of begging' which must be treated as metaphors if the line is to make sense. This is however not the case with line two which contains a symbol and is ambiguous as to literal or metaphorical interpretation. That "milkless camels pour forth with abundant milk once they are milked ... etc." is true and literally acceptable; but the implied comparison (in addition to the context) turns the whole statement into an image referring figuratively to the patron's generosity. This is also the case in the following two lines in which A.T. is addressing the patron recommending to him some of his people [Vol. I, p. 88, l. 32-33]:

1. fa-ḍmum ?aqa:ṣiyahum ?ilayka fa-?innahu
   la: yazxaru-l-wa:di: bi-ɣayri ʃiɛa:bi ,

2. wa-s-sahmu bi-r-ri:ʃi-l-luʔa:mi , wa lan tara:
baytan bi-la: ɛamadin wa la: ʔaṭna:bi

1. (So bring the remotest ones amongst them
together around you, for the river does not
swell without tributaries,

2. the best arrow is the one feathered with
harmony, and you cannot see a tent with no
pillar or ropes);

here, the three symbols contained in three successive hemistichs are true and literal. That "a river does not swell without tributaries", that "the best arrow is the one feathered with harmony", and that "a tent cannot stand with no pillar or ropes" are all true as literal propositions. As proverbs, however, they are understood differently in this context to refer figuratively to the poet's patron and his people, and to human relationships in general.

The use of symbols is not only characteristic of A.T.'s proverbial verses, but may also be encountered in verses of a different purport. In the following line, for instance, he is describing the improvement which he underwent in his life thanks to the patron's favours [Vol. I, p. 124, l. 30]:

lam ʔazal ba:rida-l-jawa:niñi mud xad-
xadtu dalwi: fi: ma:ʔi da:ka-l-qali:bi .

(My thirst has been quenched ever since I
shook my bucket in the water of that well);

this line might be an imagined scene literally recounted

by A.T.; he might be seen as a traveller, in the middle of the desert, having a rest next to a well, after he quenched his thirst. But in fact, we understand things differently in the context of the poem. A.T., we assume, is talking about himself and the satisfactions which he found in his life after he came to the patron's abode. In this way, his "bucket" (dalw) is taken not as a literal bucket, but as a symbol for his hopes, his ambitions. Similarly, "water of that well" (ma:ʔi da:ka-l-qali:bi) is understood to refer to the patron's favours. It is not a question of rejecting the literal interpretation as unacceptable or absurd, as is the case with metaphor, but rather of preferring one of two acceptable solutions to the other. In this choice, context and conventions are two operative factors. Thus, the association of 'bucket' with 'hope', 'well' with 'generosity', and the like, are common symbols in C.A. poetry, and are usually encountered in the context of Arabic panegyrics. Likewise, symbols such as 'flame' for 'passion',[1] 'dates of inferior quality' for 'base people',[2] 'thunderbolts' for 'anger and violence',[3] are assigned their underlying meaning by custom and familiarity.

In most of those cases, the transference from

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1. e.g. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 77, l.5.

2. This example is mentioned by Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. I, p. 277.

3. e.g. A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 80, l. 15.

literal to figurative interpretation takes place according to the 'metaphoric rule', that is through the perception of a hidden likeness or analogy between the symbol itself and the meaning for which it is used. Thus "my thirst has been quenched" stands as a symbol for the poet's satisfaction with his life because of an analogy between the feeling of a thirsty man after drinking and that of an ambitious man when his hopes become real; in a similar way, the "well" is taken as referring to the patron's big favours because of a hidden comparison between his generosity and the flowing water of the well: both symbols are 'metaphorical'. But A.T. also uses 'metonymic symbols', that is symbols which are based on the device of 'metonymy' (kina:yah), a type of semantic transference in which the meaning of a word or a group of words is changed by using it for another word with which it is connected (e.g. 'the village' for 'people in the village'; 'A.T.' for 'the work of A.T.', etc.). An example of 'metonymic symbols' in A.T.'s poetry is provided by the following verse in which the poet is meditating over the death of one of his best protectors [Vol. IV, p. 26, l. 39]:

tadakkartu xudrata da:ka-z-zama:ni
ladayhi wa ɛumra:na da:ka-l-fina:ʔi
(I [still] recall the greenness of those days and the thriving prosperity of that court);[1]

1. Literally, ɛumra:na da:ka-l-fina:ʔi would be rendered as "the populousness" and not as "the thriving prosperity of that court".

on its own, the word xuḍrah (i.e. greenness) might be understood literally, and this interpretation would be perfectly acceptable; but due to the context, and since 'greenness' is usually associated in our experience with wealth and prosperity, we take it as a symbol metonymically referring to those things. Similarly, ɛumra:nu da:ka-l--fina:ʔi (lit. the populousness of that court) might be taken literally as referring to a court full of people; but the poetic context here calls for an adjustment to be made in the interpretation of the verse. In this way, one is led to discover the symbolic connection between ɛumra:n (i.e. populousness) and aspects of flourishing, popularity and bustling life. All these are sorts of mental adjustments necessitated by the fact that the language which is being dealt with is the language of poetry in which symbolic interpretations are generally expected to arise. The selection of the aesthetically most acceptable solution is usually directed by the factors of context and conventions, which would help one to distinguish which underlying meanings are customarily related to this or that particular symbol.

Speaking of conventions, it is important to mention certain points regarding the way the Arab critics have studied figurative language and the relationships involved in any process of transference from literal to figurative interpretation. This would explain many of their attacks against A.T.'s use of figurative devices. A special interest will be concentrated on metaphoric

transference mainly because of the central position which this device occupies not only in poetic creation as a whole but also in A.T.'s own compositions.

In their analysis of metaphor, the Arab critics were mostly interested in analysing the nature of the similarity relation between the two terms included in metaphor. Their attempt was not to discover the laws which govern the process of transference involved, or to define the logical categories to which the two terms belong, but rather to analyse the nature of the relationship between the terms themselves, this relationship being one of similarity. This does not mean of course that they ignored pointing out the nature of the domains of the referents, that is, to state whether they are abstract, animate or inanimate. On the contrary, those domains are clearly mentioned in their works, but not for their own sake. To them, those features are important only in so far as they affect "the remoteness and strangeness of the point of similarity, and its physical or intellectual nature".[1] This is evident in al-Jurja:ni:'s discussion of one type of metaphor which appeared in one of the Prophet's sayings:

ʔiyya:kum wa xaḍra:ʔa-d-diman

(i.e. Beware of the green plant growing on dung).[2]

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1. K. Abu-Deeb: "Al-Jurja:ni:'s Classification of Istiɛa:ra...", in "Journal of Arabic Literature", Vol. II, 1975, p. 72.

2. The translation is by K. Abu Deeb: Ibid., p. 71.

Al-Jurja:ni: points out that the similitude established by this metaphor is between concrete objects, and notes that the point of similarity here is intellectual (i.e. abstract); in this image, he says,

> "the point of similarity is not the colour of the plant, its greenness, taste, smells, form or image. Nor is this point an instinctive quality or any such characteristic. The similarity is an intellectual one between a beautiful woman who is brought up in a corrupt environment or who comes from a base origin, and a plant growing on dung. Thus the dominant trait [i.e. the point of similarity] is the 'beauty of the appearance to the eye accompanied by the corruption of the inner world' and the goodness of the branch when the origin is corrupt ..." 1

Thus, the fact that both woman and plant are physical bodies (ʔajsa:m) is secondary, in the eyes of al-Jurja:ni:, compared with the point of similarity which the image is aiming to establish between them. Indeed, it is the nature of this similitude which preoccupies him strongly (i.e. whether it is close or remote, straightforward or complex, etc.) as well as the degree of intellectual effort required from the creator to perceive it and from the recipient to comprehend it. As K. Abu Deeb puts it, his main purpose in the analysis of metaphor is

> "to discover the impact of the nature of the dominant trait and its two most important features which determine the emotional and aesthetic effect on the recipient, namely its degree of exaggeration and fusion between the

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1. Al-Jurja:ni: "ʔasra:ru-l-Bala:ɣah", Vol. I, pp. 158-159; translated and quoted by K. Abu Deeb: Ibid., p. 71.

> referents of metaphor, and its remoteness and strangeness, which make it more pleasant." 1

His classification of metaphors is based on the various types of dominant trait (or, as he calls it, ʔaxaṣṣu-l--ʔawṣa:f) and the degree of interpretation (taʔawwul) needed for the perception of the point of similarity.[2]

Although coming at a relatively late age[3], those views of al-Jurja:ni: are extremely important, for they broadly follow the same line of thinking as his predecessors', and represent the culmination of a long series of treatises and works written by the Arabs on poetic creation and poetic imagery. The psychological principles on which his study of artistic expression is based are very much behind the evaluative character which marked his approach to poetic imagery in particular. To a great extent, this can be equally applied to the works of all Arab critics. In fact, their analysis of figurative language is strongly marked by their attempt to point out the criteria which make a given trope more expressive and of greater emotional and aesthetic effect than another. In other words, their interest is more concentrated on the recipient's reaction to a particular image than on the poet's role and the mental process through which he goes in order

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1. K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., p. 61.

2. For a more exhaustive survey of al-Jurja:ni:'s classification of metaphors in connection with Aristotelian and modern European classifications, see the enlightening article of K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., pp. 48-75.

3. Indeed, al-Jurja:ni: died in 1078 A.D.

to give it expression. Accordingly, one often finds them referring in different ways to features like 'unusual lexical associations' or 'defeated expectancy', those features which are highly responsible for the pleasantness of a metaphor, its strangeness or remoteness. This is evident in the following comments by some critics on one of A.T.'s most controversial verses [Vol. II, p. 88, l. 22]:

> raqi:qi ħawa:ʃi-l-ħilmi law ʔanna ħilmahu
> bi-kaffayka ma: ma:rayta fi: ʔannahu burdu
> (His [i.e. the patron's] clemency is so soft as to its hems[1] that if you have it in your hands you will not doubt that it is a garment).

The point of the controversy here is mainly around the comparison of the patron's 'clemency (ħilm) to a 'garment' (burd), the attribution of 'hems' (ħawa:ʃi:) to it, and qualifying it as being 'soft' (raqi:q). This, to the Arabs, is an unusual way of describing 'clemency'. Thus, to al-ʔa:midi:, clemency in the tradition of Arabic is usually connected with 'composure' and 'self-possession' (raza:nah), and is described as being 'august' (ɛadi:m) and 'unshakable like a mountain' (ra:jiħ, taqi:l), but

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1. "Soft as to its hems" is a literal translation of the stereotyped expression 'raqi:qu-l-ħa:ʃiyah' describing someone who is courteous, friendly, kindly, etc. This example will be further examined in Section 3 of this chapter.

never as 'soft'. Similarly, a garment is commonly praised not for its softness but rather for being 'strong' (mati:n) and 'close in its texture' (ṣafi:q).[1] In this particular situational context, therefore, one would expect to have for instance:

a) ħilmun ɛaḍi:m, ra:jiħ, razi:n, ṯaqi:l (i.e. an august, composed or unshakable clemency); ħilmun yazinu-l-jiba:l (i.e. a clemency which outweighs the mountains);

b) burdun ṣafi:q (i.e. a garment close in its texture); burdun mati:n (i.e. a strong garment).

The examples in (a) and (b) above constitute some of the habitual structural associations with which the words ħilm and burd, as individual lexical items, are normally connected in the context of praise. They are to be opposed to A.T.'s 'soft clemency' and most of all to his comparison of this moral quality to the physical object 'garment'. To the Arab critics, this image of A.T. can hardly be accepted because the point of similarity which it tries to convey is too remote, if not totally non-existent, and is therefore difficult to perceive by the recipient. In other words, this image according to them must be rejected, for it points out a likeness which is usually not discerned between the two referents, and is presented in a way which upsets the usual lexical associations

1. Al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, pp. 138-142, gives many examples from C.A. poetry; see also comments on this verse reported by al-Marzu:qi: in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, pp. 88-90, f.n. 1.

normally expected in this context.

Examined from a different angle, this image of A.T. is unusual in that it attributes concreteness and physical existence to an abstraction (clemency soft as to its hems, which would be taken for a garment if carried in the hands). The Arabs did not fail to notice this about it.[1] From this point of view, it is as peculiar as the 'clemency which outweighs the mountains', or the 'unshakable clemency' which A.T.'s critics have quoted as being more usual, more 'orthodox', hence more acceptable. In all three cases, we are dealing with words of a certain semantic class occupying a structural position normally reserved for items of a different class; in other words, the normal selectional rules of Arabic have been broken here. This, in itself, is the principle which has been earlier taken as the basis on which A.T.'s figurative language would be best approached, and its effects most adequately analysed.[2] However, the foregoing discussion shows that this principle is not always adequate for making the difference between an original trope by A.T. and another one more common or less creative. It seems therefore that the 'lexical' approach followed by the Arabs is more helpful to us in reaching these ends. This will be further examined in relation to some of A.T.'s most striking metaphors.

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1. See, for instance, al-ʔa:midi:'s comments in "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, p. 142, and al-Marzu:qi:'s in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. II, pp. 88, the first part of f.n. 1.

2. See this chapter, beginning of Section 2, p. 341 and ff.

III. A.T.'s Metaphors: Violations of Usual Lexical Associations

Let us examine the following verses by A.T. in which he is praising one of the Caliph's military generals for a victorious campaign he launched in winter against the Byzantine enemy [Vol. I, pp. 165-166, l. 29-34]:

1. laqadi-nṣaɛta wa-ʃ-ʃita:ʔu lahu waj-
-hun yara:hu-l-kuma:tu jahman qaṭu:ba: ,
2. ṭa:ɛinan manħara-ʃ-ʃama:li muti:ħan
li-bila:di-l-ɛaduwwi mawtan janu:ba: ,
3. fi: laya:lin taka:du tubqi: bi-xaddi-ʃ-ʃam-
-si min ri:ħiha-l-bali:li ʃuħu:ba: ,
4. sabara:tin ʔiḍa-l-ħuru:bu ʔubi:xat
ha:ja ṣinnabruha: fa-ka:nat ħuru:ba: ;
5. fa-ḍarabta-ʃ-ʃita:ʔa fi: ʔaxdaɛayhi
ḍarbatan ɣa:darathu ɛawdan raku:ba: ,
6. law ʔaṣaxna: min baɛdiha: la-samiɛna
li-qulu:bi-l-ʔayya:mi minka waji:ba: .

1. (... And you headed towards [the Byzantines] while winter showed a frowning gloomy face to the most valiant soldiers,
2. Stabbing the North in its neck and bringing a southerly death to the enemy land,
3. During nights whose cool wind has almost left paleness on the cheek of the sun,
4. Nights whose biting cold is stirred up to become [like] wars when the fire of wars subsides;

5. And so, you struck winter on its two cupping-veins with a blow that left it [like] a tractable mount.[1]

6. [With a blow] after which, had we listened, we would have heard the shaken throb in the breast of the days).

A reader, following this passage, cannot fail to notice the series of personifications which lie concealed in the details of its background description (e.g. the frowning gloomy face of winter, the neck of the North, paleness on the cheek of the sun, the cupping-veins of winter, the shaken throb in the breast of the days). Analysis will show that inanimate things are here described in animate terms, and the boundaries between human and non-human elements ignored. The transformational grammarian is ready to help in the understanding of this device not only by accounting for the different sub-classes of lexical categories (e.g. 'human' and 'non-human' nouns; 'animate' and 'inanimate'; 'abstract' and 'concrete', etc.) but also by explaining how those personifications are grammatically deviant, because they break the selectional rules which are

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1. The 'cupping-vein', ʔaxdaɛ, is said to be either of the two branches of the occipital artery, at the back of the neck, where the cupper applies his cup to let blood. The Arabs apparently imagined that each vein (or artery) held only a certain amount of blood, but that the cupping-vein set flowing into itself all the other veins when it was tapped, so that all were drawn into the expense of blood. See Ch. J. Lyall: "The Mufaḍḍaliyāt: an anthology of Ancient Arabian Odes", Vol. II, translation and notes, p. 103, f.n. 12, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1918.

formed to forbid the coexistence of incompatible words in a sentence. In this way, 'the neck of the North', in line 2 above for instance, would be unacceptable in view of the restriction which rules out the attribution of the noun 'neck' to other than animate nouns. However, this type of deviation is common and even expected in poetry, as noticed earlier. For this reason, it may pass without being noticed and hardly seem deviant any longer just like any other unmotivated aberration in the use of language (e.g. the 'neck of a bottle', the 'arm of a chair', the 'leg of the table', etc.). In the context of imagery in C.A. poetry, the series of personifications present in A.T.'s lines above do not seem any different in their transgression of selectional rules from the same device as it occurs in the much quoted verse of the pre-Islamic poet Labi:d in which he says:

> wa ɣada:ti ri:ħin qad kaʃaftu wa qarratin
> ʔid ʔasbaħat bi-yadi-ʃ-ʃama:li zima:muha:
>
> (Many a blustering cold morning have I encountered when its reins were held by the hand of the North wind);[1]

here, the poet uses the humanizing metaphor yadi-ʃ-ʃama:l (i.e. the hand of the North wind) in the same way as A.T., earlier, has used manħara-ʃ-ʃama:l (i.e. the neck of the North), xaddi-ʃ-ʃams (i.e. the cheek of the sun) and the like. Yet, while Labi:d's first metaphor has been widely

1. Quoted and translated by K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., p. 73.

accepted and praised by the Arabs[1] and its semantic 'oddity' generally overlooked, this has not been the case with some of A.T.'s metaphors above which appear much more striking and forceful, and have raised a lot of disapproval on the part of his critics.[2]

As may be seen, deviation from selectional restrictions seems to be of little help in explaining this apparent 'contradiction'. But the rules of 'collocation' face no such difficulty. Indeed, A.T.'s most disputed metaphors may be regarded as various sets of unusual collocations sought by the poet in the interest of variety. They come to upset the conventional coherence of the stereotyped models of expression so characteristic of the classical poetic register [see Chapter II, Section 1, pp. 33 - 52].

The idea behind collocations is that certain words, as individual lexical items, tend to be used in company of other words, also as individual lexical items, irrespective of the grammatical relations that hold between them as members of word classes or as 'parts of speech'.[3] Thus, ʃita:ʔ (i.e. winter), for instance, collocates with

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1. See, for instance, al-Jurja:ni:'s analysis of this metaphor in: "ʔasra:ru-l-Bala:ɣah", Vol. I, pp. 139-140, and in: "Dala:ʔilu-l-ʔiɛja:z", pp. 276-277; see also Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ɛumdah", Vol. I, p. 269; etc.

2. See, for instance, al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, pp. 245, 253-255.

3. On collocation see J.R. Firth: "Modes of Meaning" in "Papers in Linguistics", pp. 190-215; M.A.K. Halliday: "Categories ...", in Word, XVII, 3, 1961, pp. 276-277; R.H. Robins: "General Linguistics ...", pp. 62-68; etc.

ba:rid (i.e. cold) and vice versa. One of the meanings of ʃita:ʔ is its 'collocability' with ba:rid, and of ba:rid of course its collocation with ʃita:ʔ. This statement does not, of course, exclude such word groups like ʃita:ʔ ħa:rr (i.e. a hot winter) or ṣayf ba:rid (i.e. a cold summer), but just because of the less usual concomitance of such pairs, they stand out as more prominent in an utterance in which they occur than do ʃita:ʔ ba:rid (i.e. a cold winter) and ṣayf ħa:rr (i.e. a hot summer). It is obvious that collocations such as these are closely related to the referential and situational meaning of the words concerned. But this need not be always the case, for there are also habitual collocations which are less closely connected with extra-linguistic reference (e.g. ɛayʃ ba:rid, i.e. an easy life; ħarb ba:ridah, i.e. a cold war; qabu:l ħa:rr, i.e. a warm welcome; etc.). In those examples, which all have a range of situational reference, the second word of each pair is not used with reference to the actual temperature of the referents. In Arabic, as in English, many utterances are made of similar collocations of words which are further removed from extra-linguistic reference.

In their treatment of A.T.'s figurative language, the Arabs have referred to 'collocation' and shown how many of his metaphors are to be rejected because they deviate from the usual lexical associations. In addition, they have acknowledged the fact that the collocation of lexical incompatibles generally results in semantic oddity,

and that such oddity may or may not be justified by an explanation (i.e. it may be given a figurative interpretation or be totally nonsensical). In the case of A.T.'s metaphors, they claim, this semantic 'gap' is often too wide to bridge, unless one resorts to a complicated process of far-fetched interpretations. An interesting example of such metaphors is present in the following verse [Vol. III, p. 72, l. 2]:

> bi-yawmin ka-tu:li-d-dahri fi: ɛardi mitlihi
> wa wajdiya min ha:da: wa ha:da:ka ʔatwalu
>
> ([They left me] in a day [which looked] as long as eternity in its width, [alone] with my love which will live longer than eternity);[1]

in this verse, A.T. attributes 'width' (ɛarḍ) to 'eternity' (dahr), an image which is "utterly absurd"[2] according to his critic al-ʔa:midi:, even if 'width' is taken metaphorically. This is because, in his view,

> "words of this type are formed to refer to actual facts of reality (ha:ḍihi-l-ʔalfa:ḍ ṣi:ɣatuha: ṣi:ɣatu-l-ħaqa:ʔiq), and are far from figurative interpretation; figurative expression in this context has a known form, and a common set of usual words which must not be given up in favour of others ..."; 3

thus ṭu:l and ɛarḍ (i.e. length and width) in Arabic are commonly used in word groups like:

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1. Literally, the second part of this verse would be rendered as follows: (... with my love which is longer than this - i.e. eternity - and that - i.e. day).

2. al-ʔa:midi: "al-Muwa:zanah", Vol. I, p. 187 ("... wa ḍa:lika maħḍu-l-muħa:l", he said).

3. Ibid., pp. 187-188.

i. ṣa:ra lahu fi-l-majdi-l-ɛarḍu wa-ṭ-ṭu:lu, meaning that 'he acquired the means of glory in their entirety'; or word groups like:

ii. fi: ɛarḍi-l-ʔarḍi, meaning 'in all the width of the earth'; and the like.[1]

In the way he used them in his verse, A.T. upset the usual collocational range of the two words, and thereby made it difficult even to understand them figuratively.[2] Similarly with his humanizing metaphors illustrated above, he does not fully conform to the conventional manner of using this device and attributes human characteristics usually not attributed to certain objects. The relationship involved in this type of device, according to the Arabs, is likely to be an organization of relations based on analogy, and therefore, its success depends on the plausibility of this analogy to be established between the referents concerned. This is a condition which Labi:d's metaphor "the hand of the North wind", quoted above [see p. 364] has fulfilled as al-Jurja:ni: explains it:

> "... The meaning here is that the poet wants to compare the North wind in its control of the morning to a human being who holds something in his hand and controls it and moves it as he likes. When the poet attributed to the wind a similar action to that of a man using his hand, he lent the word 'hand' to the wind ... This is true of all similar images, where a limb or a part of the body of a human being is attributed to objects ..."; 3

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1. See other examples listed by al-ʔa:midi:, ibid., pp. 188-193.

2. al-ʔa:midi: Ibid., p. 190, wonders how far one can conceive of 'a long eternity whose length equals its width', for this is what A.T.'s image would come up to, according to him.

3. al-Jurja:ni: "Dala:ʔilu-l-ʔiɛja:z", pp. 276-277, quoted and translated by K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., pp. 73-74.

it is also a condition which is fulfilled by such metaphors as 'leg of a table', 'arm of a chair', or even A.T.'s own metaphors, which attribute a 'cheek' to the sun, a 'frowning gloomy face' to winter and the like: in all of them, the analogy established by the metaphor between the referents involved is plausible and the attribution of the human characteristic to the non-human element may be justified, a fact which explains how, in their particular collocational arrangement, they are amongst the most established images of Arabic.

This is however not the case with A.T.'s metaphor 'neck of the North' (manħara-ʃ-ʃama:l) which is 'stabbed' by the patron, or with the 'cupping-veins of winter' (ʔaxda-ɛayhi) which are struck by a blow that left it like a 'tractable mount' (ɛawdan raku:ba:) and caused fear in the 'breast of days' (qulu:bu-l-ʔayya:m). All these are unusual metaphors which introduce new collocational possibilities specially devised by the poet for the particular poetic occasion with which he is dealing. This is equally the case with the metaphor introduced in the following verse [Vol. II, p. 84, l. 16]:

ʔama: wa ʔabi: ʔaħda:tihi ʔinna ħa:ditan
ħada: biya ɛanka-l-ɛi:sa la-l-ħa:dit̪u-l-waγdu

([I swear] by all the happenings,[1] the event which led my [travelling] camels away from [your abode] is certainly a wicked event);

1. Literally: ([I swear] by the father of the happenings ...)

here, the metaphor 'wicked event' (-l-ħa:dit̪u-l-waɣdu) is based on a deviant collocation of ħa:dit̪ (i.e. event) described as being waɣd (wicked), an adjective normally given to human nouns in Arabic. Grammatically, this metaphor consists of a 'mistaken selection' resulting in the use of the abstract noun ħa:dit̪ in a collocational position relative to waɣd normally filled by a homogeneous set of animate nouns, notably nouns denoting human beings. A relationship of implicit analogy is here conceived, by which semantic dimensions are transferred from the normal set of collocates to the item which deviantly occupies their usual syntagmatic position, i.e. the deviant collocate ħa:dit̪ has to be construed as if it were a human noun referring to someone who is wicked and base, with no morals or sense of honour.

As it is, the metaphor ħa:dit̪ waɣd (i.e. a wicked event) introduces a new collocational possibility for the adjective waɣd which is less readily recognizable than its occurrence with the noun sa:ħir (i.e. a sorcerer) in a children's fairy-tale for instance. Likewise, the metaphor baya:ḍu majdika (lit. the whiteness of your glory, i.e. your shining glory), another of A.T.'s disputed innovations [Vol. I, p. 403, l. 13], is based on an unusual lexical association which is less predictable, in the context of Arabic imagery, than the collocations majdun ɛa:lin or majdun ba:siq (i.e. a high or towering glory), the latter being the result of a metaphor which has passed into enough usage to make of the adjectives ɛa:lin and ba:siq (i.e. high,

towering) habitual collocates of the abstract noun majd (i.e. glory). To a certain extent, one may speak here of a 'dead metaphor'.

In fact, a large number of A.T.'s metaphors which constitute part of the poetic register of C.A. are based on stereotyped collocations of this sort, associated with a limited set of communicative situations. Thus buħu:ru ɛana:ʔi (i.e. the oceans of my hardship) [Vol. I, p. 36, l. 25] and na:run fi-l-ħaʃa (i.e. a fire in the heart) [Vol. I, p. 77, l. 5], for instance, are two of the many metaphors of C.A. which are put formulaically and, in their context, combine pairs of highly predictable collocates, so predictable that both images have lost a lot of their figurative power and may be considered to be at a certain stage of 'moribundity', to use Leech's expression.[1]

On the other hand, the imaginative force of certain clichés of Arabic, lost through the constant recurrence of certain lexical collocations, may be restored and the faded image revitalized by being placed in a new collocational context. Thus, A.T. re-establishes the figurative power of the word group raqi:qu-l-ħawa:ʃi: (lit. to be soft-hemmed; i.e. to be courteous, polite, kindly) by using it in connection with the abstract noun ħilm (i.e. clemency) in his verse, discussed earlier [see pp. 359 - 361]:

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 147.

raqi:qi ħawa:ʃi-l-ħilmi law ʔanna ħilmahu
bi-kaffayka ma: ma:rayta fi: ʔannahu burdu
(His [i.e. the patron's] clemency is so soft
as to its hems that if you have it in your
hands you will not doubt that it is a
garment);

here, the abstract noun ħilm occupies a syntagmatic position relative to raqi:qu-l-ħawa:ʃi: usually filled by a human noun; this collocational abnormality brings a new life to the original image. In addition, the whole verse succeeds in re-establishing the link between the concrete meaning of raqi:qi-l-ħawa:ʃi: (said about a piece of clothing which has soft hems) and its current sense by comparing the 'soft-hemmed clemency' of the patron to a 'garment' (burd). In this way, the original image which has been almost forgotten, due to constant usage, is completely rejuvenated. On other occasions, A.T. uses the same image in different collocational contexts, thus attributing riqqatu-l-ħawa:ʃi: (lit. softness of hems, i.e. friendliness, amiability) to 'nature', on one occasion, to describe its coming back to life at the arrival of spring [Vol. II, p. 191, l. 1], and to the 'days', on another, to refer to a favourable spell of good fortune which they once have granted him [Vol. II, p. 426, l. 12]. This shows A.T.'s ability to exploit the remotest resources of poetic imagery with virtually unlimited freedom, despite the restricted scope of the grammatical and lexical choices available to him.

From the above discussion, one may see how the theory of collocation is more adequate for making the distinction between A.T.'s creative metaphors and those which belong to the register of C.A. poetry, compared with the grammatical approach. General oppositions of grammatical/semantic features (e.g. animate vs. inanimate, abstract vs. concrete, etc.) cannot in fact help to differentiate between a newly invented metaphor (e.g. manħara-ʃ-ʃama:l, i.e. the neck of the North) and another one more common or conventional (e.g. yadu-ʃ-ʃama:l, i.e. the hand of the North wind), since at the descriptive level, they both involve the attribution of human characteristics to non-human elements. However, while the first metaphor appears more striking and is unique to the poetic occasion where A.T. used it, the second one has passed into enough poetic usage in C.A. to be considered a customary collocation of high predictability, hence to a great extent, less creative. This comes in accordance with the view of the Arab critics on many of A.T.'s metaphors that they violate the usual lexical associations common in Arabic imagery, and thus establish semantic links which are not easily recognizable between essentially different elements of experience.

IV. Aspects of Metaphor in A.T.'s Poetry

It has been mentioned elsewhere [see this chapter, p. 348] that metaphor is based on transference involving the similarity relation. Not infrequently, in fact, it will be found that in poetry an analogy is expressed first

as a simile and then as a metaphor. This will become obvious after discussing the following verse of A.T. [Vol. I, p. 71, l. 63]:

> kam ni:la taħta sana:ha: min sana: qamarin
> wa taħta ɛa:riḍiha: min ɛa:riḍin ʃanibi
> (Many a radiant moon was captured under the radiance of the battle, and many a gleaming molar under the cloud of it);[1]

in the literal parts of the mind, one knows well enough that the sentence "many a radiant moon was captured ..." (kam ni:la ... min sana qamarin) is to be taken figuratively and that something or some person is here likened to a "radiant moon" for a particular characteristic which they both share. In this way A.T.'s metaphor would roughly correspond to the following simile:

> "Many a something [or person] that looks like a radiant moon was captured ...".

From this mental model, one has to supply to the missing 'something or person' a particular reference. Judging from the context of the poem and the rest of the verse, and knowing that the poet is describing a victory which will bring treasures and women to the victorious army, one may confidently say that reference is here made to 'women'. The comparison will thus be:

> "many a woman who looks like a radiant moon was captured ...".

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1. The translation is by A.J. Arberry: op.cit., p. 60.

In A.T.'s verse, this simile has been compressed into a metaphor by dropping the second part of the comparison (i.e. who looks like a radiant moon...) and replacing the term 'woman' (which is the 'tenor' of the metaphor, to use Richards' terminology) by 'radiant moon' (which is the 'vehicle') in what remains. The rest of the sentence (i.e. was captured) is not part of the metaphor. As for its third term, the 'ground' on which the implicit comparison is based, one must rely on personal intuition to discover it: the comparison in this case rests on a commonplace metaphorical link between visual radiance and 'radiance' in the sense of beauty, brightness and joyful appearance.

The discussion of this example is a clear indication that metaphor is an implicit and simile an explicit comparison. However, this equivalence or 'translatability' between the two must not hide important differences between them. That this is real is clear from the fact that, having perceived a likeness between a 'beautiful woman' and a 'radiant moon', the poet has preferred to put the analogy into a metaphor rather than a simile. It would be interesting therefore to assess the virtues of both devices and analyse the linguistic apparatus which conveys the idea in each one of them.

When A.T. refers to the patron as 'the abundant rain (huwa-l-ɣaytu) [Vol. I, p. 143, l. 21] and calls his gifts 'storms' (ɛaṭa:ya hiya-l-ʔanwa:ʔu) [Vol. I, p. 143, l. 20], this linguistic machinery serves to convey

a relationship between two separate elements of experience by using the words ɣaytˍ (i.e. abundant rain) and ʔanwa:ʔ (i.e. storms) figuratively instead of literally. The same relationship could well have been conveyed in the form of a simile by using such words as 'like', 'as' (mitl. ka) and others, and specifying the two terms of the balance. However this does not occur, and the statement in each case takes the form of a metaphor which superimposes both tenor and vehicle in the same piece of language. In addition to the obvious advantage of immediacy and conciseness gained through this particular linguistic machinery, both metaphors are also endowed with a great ability to allude to a wide range of things otherwise impossible to be summarized adequately had the comparisons taken the form of similes. Indeed, by being inexplicit as to both the ground of comparison and the things compared, a metaphor like huwa-l-ɣaytˍu (i.e. he is the abundant rain), for instance, is surrounded by a great deal of indefiniteness: what are its literal and figurative extremes? Where do they lie? What is the plausibility of connecting them? In front of these questions, the recipient can only rely on his own intuition to find the answers and perceive the idea which the poet is trying to express. He then might theoretically entertain the following possible literal relationships between 'he' (i.e. the patron) and 'abundant rain' (ɣaytˍ):

a. In his anger, he is like a lashing rain which destroys everything around in floods.

b. He is as cooling and relieving as an abundant

rain after a season of drought.

c. His gifts pour down on you like an enriching rain, bringing wealth and comfort.

etc.

Amongst these possibilities, the recipient has to make his own choice of the most appropriate. Two factors will help him in this task: the first is the context of the poem in which the metaphor occurs and, more generally, that of all Arabic imagery; this factor will help him to discover that rain to the Arabs is usually connected with wealth and well-being rather than with anger, floods and destruction; in a word, rain to the Arabs is a source of good omen, and therefore, is very appropriate to the context of the panegyric, the praise of the patron. The second factor is, in Leech's words, "the principle, which we unconsciously follow, of making the tenor as similar to the vehicle as is feasible; i.e. of maximizing the ground of the comparison".[1] Both factors conspire to eliminate (a) as inappropriate. One is left, then, with an interpretation of "he is an abundant rain" which is like a 'blend' of (b) and (c).

It is obvious that the explicitness of simile would not offer such a wide scope for interpretation, and the fact that it specifies the ground and even the manner of the comparison tends to add more limitation to

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 157.

its power of suggestion. However, one may well remark that, in being able to cover all those details while avoiding ambiguity and indefiniteness, there is a considerable advantage for simile over metaphor. The truth of this claim will become clear from the discussion of the following example [Vol. IV, p. 557, l. 18-19]:

1. wa law baṣurat bihi la-ra?at jari:ḍan bi-ma:?i-d-dahri ħilyatuhu-ʃ-ʃuħu:bu ,
2. ka-naṣli-s-sayfi ɛurrya min kisa:hu wa fallat min maḍa:ribihi-l-xuṭu:bu .

1. (Had she been able to see him, she [i.e. the poet's mother] would have seen a man weary and emaciated by the severe blows of fate,[1]
2. Like the blade of a sword drawn out of its sheath, with whose blows vicissitudes were subdued);

before A.T. presents the simile, he specifies the qualities which he has in mind: the man is "weary" (jari:ḍ) and "emaciated" (ħilyatuhu-ʃ-ʃuħu:bu) by the severe blows of fate; this is very definite. Then comes the mysterious simile, "like the blade of a sword ...", which induces one to visualize the link between the poet's weary and emaciated face and the blade of the sword, out of its sheath, bearing the traces of numerous wars. The result

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1. Literally, 'jari:ḍan bi-ma:?i-d-dahri' (translated here by 'weary') would be rendered as follows: "... who choked with the water of life".

of linking those elements is a further link between the poet's weariness and emaciation, and the 'subjugation' of 'vicissitudes'. The idea of vicissitudes being subdued by the blows of a sword is difficult to imagine, but in the way the poet presents it, one becomes obscurely convinced that there can be such a thing as 'subdued vicissitudes'; moreover, one may even see the picture itself by linking together the different elements involved in the simile. As W. Nowottny sums it up,

> "free effects of this and presumably of many other kinds are open to the user of simile. Just because simile is not peculiar in form as metaphor is, it leaves open a much wider range of ways of comparing one thing to another. It is hardly to be imagined that one could make a survey of the various things simile can do." 1

Further differences between metaphor and simile may still be listed. In simile, words are used literally. When A.T. describes the rebuker's arguments and says [Vol. I, p. 78, l. 6 first half]:

> ʕaḏalan ʃabi:han bi-l-junu:n ...
>
> ([Her] rebuke is [just] like madness ...),

he is simply saying that 'this thing is like that one'. He could have indicated the respect in which the elements compared are alike; but in this case he does not, and thus, leaves it to the recipient to imagine the number of ways in which they are comparable. Turning back to metaphor now, when A.T. says, speaking of the same rebuker [Vol. I, p. 242, l. 11]:

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1. W. Nowottny: "The Language Poets Use", p. 67.

wa ɛa:dilin ha:ja li: bi-l-lawmi ma?rubatan
ba:tat ɛalayha: humu:mu-n-nafsi taṣṭaxibu

(Many a rebuker whose reproof has stirred up
a need in me which left in total uproar the
worries of my heart),

one feels here that something complex is presented, that at various stages of the verse, there are some 'stumbling blocks'; those are mainly the verbs ha:ja (i.e. to stir up) and taṣṭaxibu (i.e. in total uproar) which must be interpreted as metaphors for the whole verse to make sense. One also feels here that, in the actual situation described by those metaphors, there is something present which is not named in the words of the metaphors but which, by its relation to the whole situation, suggests to the poet that a need has been "stirred up" in him and left the worries of his heart "in total uproar". This is in fact a feature typical of metaphor and well characterized by P. Henle who writes:

> "In a metaphor, some terms refer literally to one situation and figuratively to the second, while other terms refer literally only and refer to the second situation only." 1

To relate this definition to A.T.'s verse, one may note that some words (e.g. lawm, i.e. reproof; humu:m, i.e. worries) have literal reference, while the words 'stirred up' and 'uproar' have simultaneously a literal and a figurative reference. In other words, the transference

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1. P. Henle (ed.): "Language, Thought and Culture" (1958), p. 181, quoted by W. Nowottny: op.cit., p. 56.

of meaning which has affected the words 'stirred up' and 'uproar' here does not mean that they have completely lost their literal sense; on the contrary, the latter remains present although they both are used metaphorically. This aspect of metaphor, recalls al-Jurja:ni:'s crucial view about this trope and the study of semantic change in general.[1] Indeed, as K. Abu Deeb explains it, he argues convincingly that

> "the view that istiʕa:ra [i.e. metaphor] is a transference (naql) of a name from its original significance to signify something else is wrong. His argument is that in forming an istiʕa:ra, the process is one of borrowing the meaning or attributes of an object to be attributed to another object. For, he argues, in the process one does not change the meaning of the borrowed name; it is essential that this meaning should be present in the mind when an istiʕa:ra is being formed ...". 2

Thus, it is to this power of having simultaneously a literal and a figurative reference that metaphor owes its complexity. This may become clearer if one attempts to translate the following metaphor for instance [Vol. I, p. 99, l. 19, 1st hemistich]:

> waṭiʔa-l-xuṭu:ba wa kaffa min ɣulawa:ʔiha:
>
> (He trampled vicissitudes down and suppressed their pride),

here, the sentence "he trampled vicissitudes down", to take only this part of the hemistich, implies: 'He did something to vicissitudes' and 'He trampled down - let

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1. al-Jurja:ni: "Dala:ʔilu-l-ʔiʕja:z", pp. 274-279.

2. K. Abu Deeb: op.cit., p. 68, f.n. 3.

us say - the grass'. For if one had to 'explain' this metaphor, one could do so by writing a wholly literal sentence about what he (i.e. the patron) did to vicissitudes (substituting for 'trampled down' some literal phrase like 'overcame'), and then on the model of this literal sentence about the patron, write out another sentence literally describing the parallel operation of someone trampling down the grass. Those two implied sentences are present when the metaphor is used, and they operate simultaneously to provide a parallel action or reflected image, although neither of them is explicitly mentioned in the metaphor itself. This is also applicable to the second metaphor in the same hemistich (i.e. '... and he suppressed their pride') with the difference that here, the attribution of 'pride' to 'vicissitudes' implies that the latter is being compared to a human being. It is worthwhile to notice that this feature of metaphor is not shared by simile, for in simile, there is no implied element for which the recipient has to supply an image or a concept from his store of knowledge.

However, these two linguistically different ways of linking have complementary virtues of which poets in general, and A.T. in particular have often taken advantage. An example of such a blend is A.T.'s verse [Vol. II, p. 192, l. 7]:

> wa nadan ʔiḍa-d-dahanat bihi limamu-ṭ-ṭara:
> xilta-s-saña:ba ʔata:hu wa-hwa muɛaddiru
>
> (... And dew covering the locks of moist earth [with such a thin layer that] you would feel as though the clouds have passed over it neglectfully),

in which limam (i.e. locks) are metaphorically attributed to tara: (i.e. moist earth) and stand for the herbs and thickets which the poet is describing, whereas the adverb 'neglectfully' is introduced by a simile. It is interesting to note here that the poet is combining both tropes together in an attempt to bring nearer to us, readers, an insight or configuration of an experience peculiar to himself and thus not already within ours. In this verse he is met with success. But in many others, his critics accuse him of failure. This is the case for instance with the following example discussed earlier [see pp.345-346]:

1. wa kuntu ʔaʿazza ʿizzan min qanu:ʿin
   taʿawwaḍahu ṣafu:ħun ʿan jahu:li ,
2. fa-ṣirtu ʔaḍalla min maʿnan daqi:qin
   bihi faqrun ʔila: ḍihnin jali:li

1. (I had more honour than a bounty-seeker turning to a merciful benefactor for protection against the mischief of the wicked;
2. Then I became [even] more frustrated than a subtle concept in need of a sharp understanding),

in which the usual collocations normally expected in the description of honour are absent, and the terms of the comparison too remote from each other for it to be communicative.[1] This is equally the case with his other simile [Vol. I, p. 33, l. 18]:

wa masa:fatin ka-masa:fati-l-hajri-rtaqa:

1. The second element of the comparison is abstract in fact, which makes it all obscure in view of what is normally expected from simile, metaphor and other tropes to achieve. See for instance Ibn Raʃi:q: "al-ʿumdah", Vol. I, pp. 270, 286-295.

fi: ṣadri ba:qi-l-ħubbi wa-l-buraħa:ʔi

(Many a distance [have I covered] which looks as long as the [anguish] of an ever persistent lover separated [from his beloved]),

which is also unusual as to the terms which are being compared: the length of a distance and that of a lover's anguish. Many of his metaphors are similarly unusual as to their collocational associations and to their combinations of disparate elements of reference. Thus, a long controversy has been raised for this reason around his metaphor ma:ʔu-l-mala:m (i.e. the water of reproof) as well as around many of his personifications.[1] In connection with those, he has been often attacked for not being careful what analogy to choose and what words to use in the passage in which the metaphor occurs, with this resulting into either a crippled image or another one vague and tentative.

The fact remains however, that, despite all criticism, imagery is the domain of language in which the user may enjoy a complete freedom of choice. This is well stressed by S. Ullmann who says:

> "The only sphere where we can choose with virtually unlimited freedom is imagery, and in particular, simile and metaphor: any tenor may be compared to any vehicle as long as there is the remotest resemblance or analogy between them." 2

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1. See comments on this metaphor in A.T.'s poetry: Vol. I, p. 22-23, and reference to many authors who took part in the controversy in p. 23, f.n. 2-3.

2. S. Ullmann: "Stylistics and Semantics" in S. Chapman: "Literary Style: a Symposium", p. 137.

In poetry, this principle has nowadays become the instrument of innovation which all poets aspire to possess. Once more, S. Ullmann says, quoting A. Breton:

> "to compare two objects, as remote from one another in character as possible, or by any other method put them together in a sudden and striking fashion, this remains the highest task to which poetry can aspire." 1

To achieve this task in poetry may well be at the expense of certain 'orthodox' ways of linguistic communication, but one must acknowledge that there are situations where vague, tentative or suggestive language is preferable to precise formulations. In manipulating his figurative devices the way he did, A.T. seems to have been well aware of the truth of these claims and thus may be seen to have lived far ahead of his time.

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1. Ibid., p. 136.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Having reached this stage in the analysis of A.T.'s poetry, a survey of what has been done thus far would help the reader to see how its different parts fit into a general pattern. Throughout this work, the attempt has been to analyse samples of poetry in order to trace the path to its invention and discover the secrets of its existence. After dealing with various aspects of A.T.'s conformity to the conventions of his art, the rest of the analysis was devoted to the more interesting aspect of creativity peculiar to his style. Our starting point was the general question about the meaning of creativity in poetic language which was approached within the even broader concept of linguistic foregrounding and its two forms: parallelism and deviation. As the analysis has progressed, parallelism has assumed prominence over deviation due to its importance in A.T.'s work, thus getting our attention in three consecutive chapters. Then, in the last chapter, deviation was dealt with and its importance in A.T.'s use of figurative devices was scrutinized. Whatever its form, the foregrounded feature was seen to be significant and motivated, and in each case, the attempt was to point out its special significance in relation to the poem where it occurred.

One of the main advantages of this approach is that A.T.'s poetry and the rhetorical devices most typical of his style are studied on a completely new basis.

Thus, by dividing those devices into 'schemes' and 'tropes' and analysing each type on a particular level of linguistic organization, the understanding of poetic language and its devices no longer remains in the abstract vagueness encountered so often in the old critical essays and even in modern studies on C.A. poetry.

On the other hand, by viewing poetic language "as a 'hypersemanticized' medium in which the individual reader projects special significance wherever his critical judgment lets him do so",[1] one is able to make up for a major weakness which has characterized many traditional essays on rhetorical devices and the techniques of A.T.'s poetic expression, namely to have considered those devices and techniques as nothing but various means of formal adornment sought for no other purpose but themselves. As they have been considered in the various stages of this analysis, poetic devices in A.T.'s work are shown to be of great importance both to the form and to the content of the poems in which they occur. They contribute to the harmony and formal cohesion of the poetic structure and, at the same time, may be assigned a significance which is of strong bearing on the final aesthetic appreciation of the piece of poetry in which they are used.

As may well have been seen, the conduct of this analysis has often required the intervention of literary

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1. G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 225.

appreciation and reference to critical exegesis. This is to show that the line which some scholars tend to draw between linguistic analysis and literary criticism is rather artificial and that both disciplines overlap in the area of stylistics. In fact, linguistics on its own cannot explain all features peculiar to poetic language, and often one has to rely on historical information, biographical and literary knowledge in order to understand a particular instance of linguistic foregrounding in a piece of poetry. This has appeared on many occasions in the preceding analysis of A.T.'s work. Likewise, a literary critic is often in need of linguistic evidence in order to support his critical judgment. Far from destroying the beauty of the poem, linguistic description may add a lot to it by explaining it and disclosing its mystery. The present author believes that it is essential for Arabic literary criticism to adopt modern techniques of linguistic analysis in order to develop on a sound objective basis and avoid falling into the traps of subjectivity and immoderation. To conclude, it is fitting to present the view of a famous artist in words, Dylan Thomas, who acknowledges the benefit which literary appreciation may gain from technical analysis:

> "You can tear a poem apart to see what makes it technically tick, and say to yourself, when the words are laid out before you, the vowels, the consonants, the rhymes and rhythms, 'Yes, this is it. This is why the poem moves me so. It is because of the craftsmanship.' But you're back again where you began. You're back with the mystery of having been moved by words. The best craftsmanship always leaves

holes and gaps in the works of the poem, so that something that is not in the poem can creep, crawl, flash or thunder in." [1]

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1. Dylan Thomas: "Notes on the Art of Poetry", quoted by G.N. Leech: op.cit., p. 227.

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